
* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
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* Issue 61 -- January 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Mabel Normand is the November 1997 Featured Performer at the Silents Majority web site (<http://www.mdle.com/ClassicFilms/FeaturedPerformer/1197.htm>). Included is a complete reprinting of Sidney Sutherland's lengthy 1927 interview with Mabel which was originally published in Liberty Magazine in 1930 after her death.

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Three

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the third day after Taylor's body was discovered.

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February 4, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

Peculiar Old-Time Bullet That Killed Film Director May Be Key To Slayer

While some of the most prominent members of the cinema colony in Los Angeles shuddered in horror as the grim details of the slaying of William D. Taylor, well-known film director, were told from the witness chair at the coroner's inquest today, what was characterized as the most important development since investigation of the slaying began was brought to light. That was the story of the bullet with which the motion-picture director was slain--a bullet that showed by its markings it had been manufactured years ago.

As Detective Sergeant Herman Cline told of finding the peculiar shell and its probable significance in the ultimate unraveling of the mystery, listeners in the quiet hall outside the crowded inquest room could hear the subdued sobs of Mabel Normand, friend of the slain man, one of the last persons to see him alive, and herself one of the most noted figures in filmdom.

Miss Normand was called as a witness and the inquest was delayed for some minutes until she arrived. Until the time for her appearance on the witness stand she was closeted in a small room adjoining the inquest chamber, where from time to time she gave way to her grief.

...Those who were summoned and who were ready to testify after the jury had been sworn in by the coroner were:

Jesse L. Lasky, vice president of the Famous Players-Lasky organization, by whom Taylor was employed as director general.

Charles Eyton, general manager of the West Coast Studios of that corporation.

Miss Mabel Normand, noted film star, who so far as the police know was the last person to see Taylor alive.

Douglas MacLean, another film star, whose home adjoins that of Taylor.

Mrs. Douglas MacLean, wife of the star.

Detective Sergeants Wallis, Ziegler, Herman Cline, Winn, Murphy, Cato and Cahill.

Henry Peavey of 127 1/2 East Third street, negro servant of Taylor, who found the body of the slain man.

Harry Fellows, chauffeur [sic] for Taylor.

William Davis, chauffeur for Miss Normand.

Verne Dumas, wealthy oil man, who was one of the first neighbors to enter the house.

E. C. Jesserund [sic], owner of the apartment occupied by Mr. Taylor.

...Charles Eyton, general manager of the Lasky coast organization was called as the first witness. He was questioned by Coroner Nance:

Q. Mr. Eyton, have you viewed the remains? A. Yes.

Q. And you have identified the body? A. Yes, sir. It is William Desmond Taylor.

Q. How old was Taylor at the time of his death and was he married?

A. He was 45. Yes he had been married.

Q. When did Mr. Taylor die? A. Thursday, or perhaps some time on Wednesday evening. I did not see the body until Thursday morning.

Q. Please tell what you know of the situation. A. I was called Thursday morning by Harry Fellows, assistant to Mr. Taylor, who said that he had died suddenly as the result of a hemorrhage. I immediately went to the house where I found a deputy coroner and several other persons. The deputy declared death was due to an internal hemorrhage, and after reaching his hand under Taylor's vest, and finding a little blood, he stated that he believed it had run down from his mouth. I was not satisfied, however, that such was the case, and I called Harry Fellows. We then turned Mr. Taylor over onto

his face, and pulling up his shirt, discovered the bullet wound.

Q. Did you speak to any one about Mr. Taylor's residence as to whether or not a shot had been heard during the evening previous? A. Yes, I talked with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas MacLean.

Q. Did they fix any definite time that they believed they heard the shot. A. Mr. MacLean said it was about 8 or 8:15 o'clock. Mrs. MacLean thought it was a little later.

Questioned by a juror Mr. Eyton answered as follows:

Q. Was there any evidence of a struggle in the room? A. Not as far as I could see.

Dr. A. S. Wagner, county autopsy surgeon was the next witness.

Q. Did you perform an autopsy on William D. Taylor? A. Yes. Upon examination of the body of Mr. Taylor I found a bullet wound in the left side about 6 1/2 inches below the arm. The bullet passed through the left lung, and came out through the chest and over the right lung, lodging in the neck 4 1/2 inches to the left of the right shoulder.

Q. What was the cause of Mr. Taylor's death? A. A gunshot wound in the chest caused his death.

Mabel Normand, film star, was the next witness. She was not in the court when called, and was compelled to make her way through the crowd. The coroner told her to take a seat. She was plainly nervous, but not excited.

Q. What is your name? A. Mabel Normand.

Q. What is your occupation? A. Motion pictures.

Q. Were you acquainted with William D. Taylor, the deceased? A. Yes.

Q. Were you a visitor at his home last Wednesday evening? A. Yes.

I arrived at his home at 7 p.m.

Q. Did you leave Mr. Taylor alone in his room? A. No, he came with me out to the car. He stood and talked with me and told me he would call me at my home later in the evening. When I drove away I waved my hand at him and then he went back to his apartment.

Q. Do you know when Henry Peavey, Mr. Taylor's valet, left the apartments? A. I don't know just exactly the time, but he left before I did.

Q. Then Mr. Taylor told you that he would call you later, and did he ever call you? A. No; he never called me. When I told him "good-by" at the car it was the last time I ever saw him alive.

Henry Peavey, Taylor's valet was called to the stand. He told Coroner Nance that his occupation is that of cook and valet, and that he had been employed by Taylor for a period of six months. He said he was in the Taylor apartments on the evening of the tragedy.

Q. When did you leave Mr. Taylor's home that evening? A. About 7:15 p.m.

Q. Was there anyone else in the house besides yourself at the time you left? A. Miss Normand. That was all. Miss Normand came to the house to talk with Mr. Taylor about a book. It was a red-backed book, and they were discussing it when I left. They were both seated in the living-room not far from the front door. I had locked the back door and was leaving by the front door, and that's how I know where they were sitting. I always went out the front door when I went home in the evening.

Q. When did you see Mr. Taylor again? A. The next morning about 7:30 o'clock.

Q. What was Mr. Taylor doing when you next saw him? A. He was lying on the floor in the living-room flat on his back, a dead man. When I entered the door I first saw his feet. I didn't know what to think of his position on the floor and I spoke to him. I spoke to him two or three times, and then suddenly I saw blood on his face and on the floor, and then turned and ran out of the house, yelling at the top of my voice. Mr. Coroner, I was pretty badly scared, and I did not know what I was saying.

Following a series of questions Peavey testified that Mr. Taylor was wearing the same clothing he had worn the evening before. He said that none of Mr. Taylor's jewelry had been disturbed. He also said the lights were burning just as they were the previous evening.

The next witness was T. H. Ziegler. He stated he was a police officer and he had been called to the Taylor home that morning to investigate the shooting.

Mr. Ziegler said:

"I found Mr. Taylor just inside the door of his apartments lying on his back, rigid and dead. Much blood had been flowing from his mouth, and it covered the back of his head and a portion of the floor near by.

Q. Did you discover any evidence of violence? A. None whatever.

Q. Did you find any weapons in the room? A. Not in that room. I went upstairs and found a 32-caliber automatic revolver in another room. It had five loaded shells in it, and had not been fired for days, perhaps weeks.

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February 4, 1922

NEW YORK JOURNAL

Los Angeles--...Captain of Detectives Adams issued the following statement concerning the case at his office at Police Headquarters:

"With seven detective sergeants detailed on the case, I am confident the slaying of Taylor will not be chronicled in the police records of unsolved murders.

"True, it may be several days before we make the necessary eliminations and definitely establish the motive of the slayer and get behind the scene which now may appear somewhat hazy. It is the opinion of Captain Charles R. Moffatt, veteran of the detective bureau, and myself that this most baffling case will be cleared of all mystery.

"Where there is a will there is a way, is in expression which should be adopted to this investigation and the officers running down the various clues will eventually bring the slayer to book. This is my confident belief.

"This case is even more baffling than the recent sensational slaying of Officers Brett and Clester. We had little or nothing to work on at that time, but detectives did what was believed to be the impossible in rounding up those alleged bandits and slayers.

"It is my desire to inform the many friends of Taylor that no stone is being left unturned by us and we want their help and confidence, with the

assurance that we will arrest Taylor's slayer before the case is closed."

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February 4, 1922

PHOENIX GAZETTE

Los Angeles--...That a woman was involved in the murder was the theory advanced by Sheriff William I. Traeger of Los Angeles.

"From what I have been able to learn," the sheriff said, "it appears to me that one woman and one man are responsible for the victim's death. The woman supplied the incentive and the man did the slaying."...

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February 4, 1922

LONG BEACH TELEGRAM

Gun Man Sought

Los Angeles--"Dapper Dan" Collins, two gun man, master blackmailer, is "wanted for questioning" in connection with the murder of William Desmond Taylor.

This was revealed to the United Press exclusively today by private investigators at work on the mysterious slaying of the famous motion picture director.

"Dapper Dan" is now at large, detectives said, with a price of \$5000 on his head following the shooting in New York last May of John H. Reid, well to do manufacturer, at the home of Hazel D. Warner.

"Dapper Dan" has been traced from New York to Denver, from Denver to Salt Lake City, and from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles, the investigators asserted.

He recently escaped a trap set for him when a motion picture actress whom he was attempting to use as a tool in another blackmail project,

informed on him.

Detectives are attempting to establish whether or not this blackmail scheme involved Taylor's mystery shrouded past.

Underworld acquaintances of "Dapper Dan" told investigators, according to the latter, that Collins had boasted his intention of "finishing this deal single handed, since the come on girl had crossed him up."

The detectives believe that "Dapper Dan's" intended victim was some one obviously possessed of considerable wealth, who was connected with the motion picture industry, they informed the United Press.

This belief is based on the fact that the blackmailer was attempting to use a film actress as a lure.

Collins, it is believed, was very probably intimate with the details of Taylor's past in New York, bits of which are now coming to light for the first time...

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February 4, 1922

SACRAMENTO BEE

Los Angeles--...The imp of the perverse seems to have provided for the director, who won fame for genius in producing movie thrillers, a more colorful drama around his death than the motion picture screen has ever provided the public. Mabel Normand, Mary Miles Minter and Neva Gerber are three of the motion picture actresses involved in the police investigations. Reports have come to the police, they say, that a love affair at one time or another existed between each of these and the slain director.

Police say, without mentioning the name, that a motion picture actress is at the center of the investigation.

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February 4, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAM

Los Angeles--...Taylor, from the evidence gathered by the police, was a lover of the bizarre as well as a quiet student. Weird narratives of a mystic love cult in the Hollywood district crept into his life. Stories of his attendance at parties where underworld characters smoked opium are said to have been uncovered...

His friends are certain that he attended these obscure and under-cover affairs only to add to his artistic knowledge and to enable him to cast properly and to arrange moving picture scenes. He was a man of mystery, who made friends easily with men, but seemed to shun women...

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February 4, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CALL

Search for the slayer of William D. Taylor, Los Angeles film director, turned suddenly and unexpectedly to San Francisco today with the receipt of telegraphic advices from the south that a suspect now hunted in this city is believed to have directed the murder from San Francisco.

Telegraphic advices from authoritative sources in the south stated definitely that the Los Angeles police had wired the local authorities asking that a dragnet be set over the entire San Francisco Bay region for the suspect.

Receipt of these instruction here was shrouded by the local police with the utmost secrecy.

Linked with these new development in San Francisco was the theory advanced by Los Angeles detectives that the man who looted Taylor's Los Angeles home on December 4 or 5 was not his former valet, Edward F. Sands, now sought in connection with the case, but a well known film star, who was driven to burglary by desperation over financial troubles.

That Sands, who pawned Taylor's stolen jewelry in Fresno and Sacramento under the name of William Deane Tanner, now known to be the true name of

Taylor, perpetrated the first burglary of Taylor's home, in July, and acted as accomplice of the second burglar in disposing of loot, was a theory entertained by the Los Angeles investigators.

...the burglary in December in the Taylor home showed strong signs of having been perpetrated by a novice and information uncovered led to the belief that a film star in financial straits was responsible.

Sands now is believed to have been implicated with this person and to have acted as an accomplice by disposing of the loot...

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February 4, 1922

R. W. Borough

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Taylor Spent His Last Day Buying Books

Less than three hours before he was slain William Desmond Taylor, motion picture director, was mulling through volumes of poetry on the shelves of C. C. Parker's book store, 520 West Sixth street.

Veiling an aesthete's enthusiasm behind a kindly reserve Taylor glanced casually through his beloved books and finally turned to Miss Mae Irons, saleslady.

"He purchased 'The Home Book of Verse' in two volumes," Miss Irons said today. "The work is a modern anthology of English verse. He paid \$25 for it."

It was only a few minutes before 5 o'clock when Taylor left the Parker store.

"He seemed in normal spirits," Miss Irons said. "He was a very courteous gentleman. I did not know who he was until Mr. Parker told me afterward."

According to Miss Irons, Taylor said he was buying the anthology so that he might give one of the volumes to a friend. He had previously given the

books to this friend, he explained, and one of them had been lost.

Taylor introduced himself to Parker before leaving the store.

"I know you well by reputation," Parker said to him jovially, "but those of us who know, don't count much on reputation."

Taylor's answer was an amused smile.

It is believed the motion picture director went almost immediately home from the book store...

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February 5, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mabel Normand Letters Lost From Death House

Missing letters and telegrams sent by Mabel Normand, celebrated film star, to William Desmond Taylor, the famous motion-picture director who was slain last Wednesday night within a few moments after Miss Normand left his home, formed the basis of a separate investigation hinging about the murder mystery last night.

Captain of Detectives Adams and Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill last night questioned Mary Miles Minter, also a widely known screen actress, concerning her knowledge of the life of Mr. Taylor. The officers, after a long session with Miss Minter, declared they had uncovered no important new facts.

Miss Normand made a personal visit to the home at 404-B South Alvarado street, where Mr. Taylor's body was found, a bullet in his back and she asked for her letters. She went to the top drawer of Mr. Taylor's dresser to get them. They were not there. Captain of Detective Adams told her he did not know where they were. Late last night he repeated the statement.

With the officials seeking these letters Charles Eyton, general manager of the Famous Players-Lasky studio and who assumed charges of many of the

dead man's personal effects, also stated he did not have them, according to police.

The visit of Miss Normand, directly after the Coroner's inquest earlier in the day, was dramatic in many respects. She appeared at the Taylor apartment while Officers Cline, Cahill, Cato and Winn were there with Capt. Adams.

Mabel Normand then re-enacted the scene that the officers believe took place shortly before the fatal shot was heard by neighbors within a few minutes after Miss Normand left.

She arranged the furniture of the handsomely appointed apartment as it was on the last visit she paid to the director, who has filmed such stars as Mary Pickford, Mary Miles Minter, Betty Compson and others.

She showed where the chair that was overturned on Mr. Taylor's legs when the body was found, was standing when she left the home about 7:45 p.m. last Wednesday.

She again told of some of the conversation which she and Mr. Taylor had that night. And she showed how Mr. Taylor had escorted her from the court of the apartments to her automobile, in which her chauffeur was sitting...

But during this visit, Miss Normand asked for her letters. She said she knew Mr. Taylor kept them in the top drawer of his dresser and there the search was directed in vain. Public Administrator Bryson could not be found all day yesterday but the officers declare that to the best of their knowledge he has not taken charge of the letters.

Miss Normand last night said, "I am surprised that anyone should have been interested in these letters of mine to Mr. Taylor. I am sure there is nothing in them of any interest to the general public.

"There is nothing in them that would help the police in any way. There were some of my letters in Mr. Taylor's room--I would say six or seven and several telegrams I had sent him while I was in New York.

"The letters, too, were those sent by me to Mr. Taylor, when he was in New York or when I was in New York.

"I knew they were in his dresser drawer because he showed them to me

once when he showed me over the house immediately after he was robbed.

"On that occasion he happened to open the top drawer of his dresser and I saw the letters.

"I said, 'Why, you're not keeping those letters, are you?' and he made some pleasant remark, saying he was keeping them."

In addition to the mystery of Miss Normand's letters and the efforts of the officers to reconstruct as nearly as possible the scene before the crime investigators from the detective bureau, the District Attorney's office and the Sheriff's office worked well into the night unraveling some of the loose ends of the case.

Mary Miles Minter, film luminary and close friend of Mr. Taylor, was reported early yesterday to be confined to her home because of illness. On the morning the murder was discovered she rushed to the Taylor home and became almost hysterical when she confirmed the news of his death.

...Placing the home of a widely known Hollywood man under surveillance late yesterday, officers were searching last night for this man, who is wanted as a material witness.

Several new clues, one of which is declared to have placed this man's automobile in the vicinity of the Taylor flat at 404-B South Alvarado street about the time of the slaying, have been uncovered. This man is widely and somewhat unfavorably known among many film celebrities and his name has figured in previous police investigations. His mysterious visits at homes of several members of the film colony are being checked in connection with the new angle.

Officers late in the day were watching his home. Vigorous efforts were being made to locate him for questioning.

Meanwhile, other officers, particularly Detective Sergeants Yarrow and Mallheau, narcotic traffic experts, turned their attention to another new angle. They started yesterday afternoon to investigate several reports concerning "dope" traffic in Hollywood and other supposed clues, which tend to indicate that visits of "peddlers" of dope had been made in that vicinity.

A report of a supposed threat made on the night of the murder also was

being run down by the officers. This report, made by a downtown business man to the police, was expected to set the officers on the trail of a man who is quoted as saying on the night Mr. Taylor was slain within a few minutes after Mabel Normand, film star, left the Taylor home, "There will be a movie director show up missing in the morning."

...Capt. Adams yesterday stated it is not impossible that Mr. Taylor was killed by a burglar, who seized upon the opportunity provided when Mr. Taylor escorted Miss Normand to her automobile to sneak in the house. The position of the bullet and the line of fire indicated shows, Capt. Adams said, that the assassin probably was crouching behind the door when Mr. Taylor entered...

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February 5, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Valet Sobs at Inquest

There were no women's tears at the inquest yesterday which determined that William Desmond Taylor came to his death at the hands of an assassin. The only sobs were contributed by Henry Peavey, negro valet and cook, who wailed aloud when he entered the inquest rooms at the Ivy Overholtzer undertaking rooms, where Coroner Nance conducted the hearing.

...Sobs interfered somewhat with Peavey's testimony. He knelt on the floor by the bier first and sobbed aloud and his wails were frequent during the entire hearing...His mourning sounded so much like a guffaw that many smiled, but there were tears in Peavey's eyes...

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February 5, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Error May Have Caused Murder

Denver, Feb. 4--William Desmond Taylor, Los Angeles motion-picture director, may have been murdered by mistake due to his resemblance to a man hated by some underworld avenger. This opinion was given today by Judge Ben B. Lindsey when he learned of Taylor's death at the hands of an assassin.

Judge Lindsey said Mr. Taylor told him of having been held all night by Denver police who believed he was a man much wanted. Mr. Taylor said his protestations of innocence caused him to be severely beaten by police clubs. The following morning, after he had established his identity, profuse apologies were extended, but he never learned the name of the man for whom he was mistaken.

"Was he murdered for revenge by some crook whom his double had betrayed?" Judge Lindsey asked. "He may have been the image of some underworld character."

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February 5, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mabel Shy of Camera at Inquest

A separate "thriller" was staged at the undertaking establishment of Ivy Overholtzer, Tenth and Hill streets, during the inquest over the body of William D. Taylor yesterday.

Mabel Normand, the subject of millions of exposures, became camera shy. After posing for still and motion pictures for years, the film star and central figure in the murder investigation fought hard to avoid photographers--and failed.

At 10 o'clock, the hour set by Coroner Nance for the start of the inquest, Mabel Normand was missing. The Coroner ordered a telephone search for her. The wires began to buzz. About fifteen minutes later two of

Mabel's publicity men walked in the undertaking parlor. Then the newspaper photographers discovered that while they were watching the front of the house Mabel was hurried in through the back alley, under a fence and through the back yard of the establishment and was sitting in a corner of the hall.

There was a lot of scurrying. The press agent brigade, always on the effort to get Mabel's name and picture into the papers, formed a flying wedge and with the help of other film officials and general assistants landed Mabel safely inside a private office. There, in the seclusion and protection of the darkened room. Mabel rested until she was called. After the inquest there was more press agent strategy. Back doors were opened, gates held ajar. The big limousine was backed into an alley, behind an ice truck. Mabel, surrounded by various and sundry publicity experts, managers, legal representatives and other friendly infantry, appeared in a small door at the back of the undertaking establishment. From there she and her supporters dashed madly toward a little gate, down three steps and into the alley.

Click, click, click went camera shutters. Then there was a race down the alley, with Mabel and her manager in the lead.

Miss Normand managed to get inside the car. There she remained until the last of her guard piled in and down the alley sped the \$7000 automobile.

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February 5, 1922
Lannie Haynes Martin
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Double Role Jars Filmdom

Revelation in Life of Screen Director Astonishes Friends;
Thought Him to Be Bachelor

The most unfeigned astonishment was expressed yesterday throughout the entire local filmdom over the disclosures made regarding the dual role played

in life by William Desmond Taylor, noted film director, who was shot Wednesday night.

Both surprise and regret were the feelings expressed in the Mary Miles Minter household. Mrs. Julia B. Miles, Miss Minter's grandmother, said: "Somehow my faith in human beings is a little shaken this morning because of all people with a shadowy past I would never have suspected Mr. Taylor. In fact I asked him once if he were a bachelor or a widower and he said 'I am a confirmed bachelor,' and as I believed him to be the very essence of truth I naturally felt shocked to learn he had a wife and child.

"My granddaughter, Miss Minter, looked on him as a child might regard a father. She is 19 and he was 55 [sic], and she is an impulsive child and when she heard of his death the other morning she rushed over there and cried all over the place without a thought of having her name dragged into the affair.

"We all liked him and admired him because he was so kind, because he was such a thorough gentleman and such a profound scholar. He was a man of moods, however, sometimes becoming very depressed and gloomy, and one winter when he was directing a picture of Miss Minter's which was being filmed in Boston, he became so despondent that my grand-daughter nicknamed him 'Desperate-Desmond,' just in jest, you know.

"Miss Minter has only seen Mr. Taylor once in the last five months and I was with her at the time. We were driving up Broadway and Mr. Taylor passed us in his car and my grand-daughter said, 'Oh, Mr. Taylor has repainted his car,' and I said, "Yes, I suppose that man who stole his things tore the car all to pieces. Mr. Taylor stopped and we passed a few friendly greetings with him, but we did not mention any of his troubles with the man who had robbed him, or touch on any of his personal affairs, for while our friendship with him was pleasant and cordial, it was by no means intimate."

Claire Windsor expressed surprise that her name had been connected in any way with that of the dead man.

"I had never been out but once in my life with Mr. Taylor, " said Miss Windsor, "and that time it was arranged without my knowledge. Mr. Moreno

invited me to join a party of four at the Ambassador and Mr. Taylor was the escort he provided for me. He seemed an extremely reserved and diffident man, but very courteous and dignified, and I liked him."

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February 5, 1922
ARIZONA REPUBLICAN

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--...The bullet which was taken from Taylor's body was produced at the inquest, then returned to detectives who were endeavoring to learn its history. The missile was found practically intact and retained its original shape due, county autopsy surgeon A. F. Wagner said, to its not having struck a bone during its passage through Taylor's body.

The bullet was declared to be of unusual type, a distinguished feature being a groove around its circumference near the base.

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February 5, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...[telling of Henry Peavey on the witness stand at the inquest]

"What did you see?"

"I saw his feet, and I said 'Mr. Taylor'--just like that. Then I saw his face, and I turned and run out and yelled. And then I yelled some more--"

And then Henry broke into high pitched laughter as he recalled his fright and terror. Laughed as he thought of himself going in and speaking to a dead man. It was a huge joke--no doubt about it. And the joke was on him. Of course, He laughed and those in the room laughed with him...

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February 5, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mistaken for Double, New Crime Angle

Denver, Feb. 4--A clew uncovered her today suggests the possibility that the murder of William Desmond Tanner Taylor was a case of mistaken identity. Coupled with the statement of friends of Taylor that he was a genial soul, without a known enemy in the world, the theory that he was murdered by a person who though he was someone else becomes probable.

This new angle on the case was furnished by Judge Ben B. Lindsey of the Juvenile Court, who became intimate with Taylor during the filming of "The Soul of Youth," a picture which Taylor directed and in which Judge Lindsey was featured.

Lindsey said that Taylor had told him of his experiences in Denver ten years ago, when the famous director was a mining engineer working at Ouray.

On one of his frequent visits to Denver, Taylor told Lindsey he had been mistaken for another man by a policeman and placed under arrest. When Taylor protested and affirmed that he was not the man in question, the policeman attacked him with his club and beat him severely. He was lodged in the city jail over night. Taylor's story continued, but in the morning was able to establish his identity and was released with profuse apologies. He never learned the name of the man he was mistaken for and was booked merely "For investigation."

Was Taylor the walking image of some underworld character?

Was he murdered for revenge by some crook whom his double had betrayed?

Did he know his own double and was he slain by the man he looked like to prevent his informing the police of the caller's actions? These are questions which the authorities will have to solve in their investigations of the film director's mysterious murder.

Judge Lindsey himself did not suggest the possibility of Taylor's being slain by mistake. He appeared quite perplexed about a motive for the crime,

describing Taylor as one of the kindest and most gentle men he had ever known.

By a coincidence he was reading a letter from Louis Sargent, who played the leading juvenile role in "The Soul of Youth" when he learned of the director's death.

"Don't you wish we could appear together again in one of Mr. Taylor's pictures?" wrote Louis. Scarcely a moment later Mrs. Lindsey entered the judge's room and informed him of Taylor's murder.

"William Desmond Taylor was one of the finest types of gentlemen I ever met," said Judge Lindsey today.

"He was not the type of man one would connect with scandal in the movies. I don't believe that anything will develop from this tragedy to throw discredit upon his character.

"He was a scholarly man, patient, kindly, and gentle. Perhaps his quiet disposition may have developed the impression of his being a 'mystery man.' I do not believe there is any mystery to his discredit.

"It was in May, 1920, that I was with him almost daily while we were working together on a moving picture called 'The Soul of Youth,' in which I consented to do the part of a judge of a juvenile court. During this time I met him frequently at the studio and a number of times at the office.

"He was interested in the boy problem, as shown by his productions of 'Tom Sawyer,' 'Huckleberry Finn' and 'The Soul of Youth.' I watched his work at the studio with children, and I used to tell him he would make an excellent juvenile court judge because he had such marvelous patience and could get so much out of children. I suppose that is the reason he got so much out of the stars among the women whom he had successfully directed, including Mary Pickford, Mary Miles Minter, Elsie Ferguson and others.

"He had been the means of helping one little girl whom I once knew in this court and was always glad to acknowledge any of my letters about young people I knew in connection with the movies.

"The last I heard of him was about the first of the year, when he sent me a little Christmas and New Year message."

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February 5, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAM

Noted Actor Barred From Studio After Jealous Outbreaks

Los Angeles--A film actor, known throughout the country to movie fans, quarreled bitterly with William Desmond Taylor, murdered movie director, over an unnamed actress they both loved, the police learned today.

Detectives, backed by the \$100,000 fund which is being raised to track down the director's slayer, are investigating the story of bitter altercations between Taylor and this so-far unnamed actor, who is so prominent his introduction into the case may prove its greatest sensation.

The actor who quarreled with Taylor had just been barred, according to Harry Fellows, Taylor's assistant director, from the Lasky "lot," and ordered never to come again. He made attempts to reach Taylor, according to Mr. Fellows, but failed. They were enemies because of their mutual love of a pretty film star who played with both.

While working on this as a possible clew, detectives today planned a general questioning of all women, most of them film beauties, who are known to have been on intimate terms with Taylor...

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February 5, 1922

TOPEKA CAPITAL

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--...No clue was brought out at the inquest which might shed light upon the gold-tipped, woman's cigaret found near Taylor's rumpled bed...

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February 5, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--...It has been learned that Taylor, or Tanner, kept in his bachelor apartment bedroom, in the bureau drawer, a set of pink silk nightgowns and combinations.

It has been learned that Sands had charge of these and that he used to fold them up every morning and smooth them out. It has been learned that he used to fold them in a certain way and that every morning he would find they had been folded by some one else--and sometimes there were stray hairpins on the floor.

They have learned that the halo painted around the dead man's head by admiring friends does not belong there; is a mockery.

Taylor's body lies in the undertaking parlors, covered with a satin pall save for the head--the head of an Aztec, with thin wide lips, thin aristocratic nose, high cheek bones, spangled gray hair...

There were no women's tears at the inquest today; only the tears of Harry [sic] Peavey, the dark-skinned valet and cook. He wailed aloud when he went into the room. He kneeled down and cried. He cried on the witness stand, cried brokenly, covering his face with his big hands...

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February 5, 1922

NEW YORK WORLD

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--...It is believed that if robbery was the motive the burglar, after firing the shot, became frightened that the noise might have aroused some persons in the neighborhood and fled without attempting to steal anything. Taylor was a man who never would have obeyed an order to "Put up your hands," his friends say.

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February 5, 1922

Edward Doherty

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--...Miss Minter was not at the inquest, which was held this morning; but she was represented by counsel. She had known the dead man well. She was hysterical when she learned of his death.

"It was terrible," she said. "I rushed at once to my mirror and looked at my face. I was appalled. I kept the expression and hurried to mamma.

"'Mamma,' I cried, 'did you ever see this expression on my face before.'

"'No,' she said; 'it is perfect. Frozen horror! You've never done it before.'"...

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February 5, 1922

ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT

Los Angeles, Feb. 4-- ...[telling of Henry Peavey on the witness stand at the inquest]

"Who was the first person that you told Mr. Taylor was dead?"

It was then that the negro began laughing in a hysterical manner. He doubled forward in the chair. His shrieks of laughter caused a real sensation. A number of women spectators appeared frightened by the actions of the witness who was finally quieted. He was then asked...

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February 5, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--Henry Peavey, negro, who described himself as "Mr. Taylor's valet," was a conspicuous figure at the inquest over the body of his

former master here this morning. Dressed in a natty check suit, Peavey arrived early and was the center of several groups of curiosity seekers.

Just before the inquest began he asked permission to see the body. He was led to the room where the body of the famous film director lay.

Peavey approached the body and then broke down. He cried for more than a minute. Then he walked around the corpse several times.

"He looks just like he did many times when I would go to wake him up in the morning to give him his medicine--just so natural," he said, tears streaming down his face.

A few minutes later Peavey took his seat in the inquest room, having mastered his emotions.

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February 5, 1922
BOSTON ADVERTISER

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--One of the leading motion picture actors of the Hollywood colony is definitely under suspicion as the slayer of William Desmond Taylor, noted film director. And the motive--jealousy over a woman, who is as well known in the realm of the silent drama as he.

These were the latest developments today in the widespread police effort to unravel the tangle of the tragic Hollywood mystery.

There were said to be many striking facts upon which to base the theory of this man's possible participation.

1. His physical characteristics. He, like the man who was seen to come from the Taylor apartment at No. 404B South Alvarado street on Wednesday night by Mrs. Douglas MacLean, immediately following a revolver shot, is about five feet ten inches in height.
2. This man, now believed beyond question to be the murderer, wore a silk scarf around his neck and a plaid cap. The actor whose name has been injected into the case is known to have worn a scarf, and frequently he dons a cap.

3. The actress, who is believed to have been the innocent cause of the assassination, is known to have received attentions from both Taylor and this other man.

4. A few days before his violent end, Taylor received a telephone message. He answered the caller gruffly in two or three monosyllables and hung up. Within five minutes the same man called again. This time Taylor, in a rage, refused to talk with him.

5. Taylor gave orders that this man was not to come on the "lot," the colloquial name for the grounds of the studio.

Long and patiently these facts have been assembled; the police admit that they may mean nothing or everything.

As a working hypothesis, the officers are proceeding in a straight line from the crime to the threshold of the woman, there to find, if the theory is correct, that the motive was something deeper even than jealousy.

What that something may have been remains to be revealed. It is enough for the moment to say that, assuming the suspicion to be correct, the man forced a secret from the actress, and upon learning it went forth with murder in his heart...

The police are even more deeply interested in the past of the actor now under suspicion--tentative suspicion, it might be called.

This man had been in Los Angeles only a few years. He is about thirty years of age and once lived abroad. He was only recently raised to a high place in the picture world. Before that he had much ado to make a fair living as an "extra" and small part actor.

He is known to be deeply interested in criminology and had planned a picture dealing with crime wherein he was to play a spectacular part.

He is known to have been very attentive to the young woman who recently has been seen in Taylor's company. There has been no showing that Taylor was in love with her; in fact, a fine tooth combing of the director's social life in Los Angeles has not brought forth a line of evidence that he was in love with any woman.

But the reverse of the equation is entirely different, it is said, that

is, there are women who are known to have been infatuated with him.

One of these stands at the very top of the profession. However, she is not the one whose name is linked with the tragedy in the speculation affecting the well known actor...

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February 5, 1922

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--One of the most prominent actors of the Hollywood motion picture colony is said to be under surveillance by the police while they are investigating his movements on the night that Wm. D. Taylor, noted director, was shot to death in his fashionable bungalow.

The actor, who also has directed several pictures, recently is asserted to have had a bitter quarrel with Taylor due to jealousy over one of the most beautiful film actresses.

Another theory engaging the attention of the police is that Taylor whose dual identity as William D. Taylor and Wm. Cunningham Deane Tanner has been revealed, was slain by a notorious blackmailer known as "Dapper Dan" Collins, alleged murderer and gun man. Collins, the police say, murdered a New York manufacturer in May, 1921, under circumstances similar to the slaying of Taylor. For the New York crime a reward of \$5000 is said to be standing for Collins' apprehension.

The description of Collins tallies in many respects with that of the mysterious man's double Mrs. MacLean claims she saw leaving the Taylor home last Wednesday night, when the director met his death.

Fleeing from New York, Collins is said to have gone to Denver and Salt Lake and thence to Los Angeles. Here he stopped at one of the most fashionable hotels and immediately cast about for some wealthy victims. A famous film actress was approached by Collins, who sought to force her to act as his lure in victimizing rich members of the film colony. She put him off, asking him to see her later and then informed her attorney. When Collins

came she talked with him while waiting her attorney's arrival.

Becoming impatient and enraged Collins is said to have struck the actress in the face and rushed away. No complaint was made against him, as the woman did not desire publicity.

Some weeks later a bunco man was arrested and he is said to have known Collins and declared that the latter swore he would kill a certain prominent motion picture man, feeling that the latter had thwarted him in the blackmailing design.

The whereabouts of Collins now are unknown. He had a fondness for caps and frequently wore those of plain patterns. The mystery man seen by neighbors leaving the Taylor home shortly after the murder wore a plain cap...

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February 5, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Late last night Detective Captain Adams, after a three hour conference with Mary Miles Minter, issued an official statement in which he said, "Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill, together with myself, interviewed Miss Minter. We talked with her several hours regarding her relations with Taylor. We are absolutely satisfied that Miss Minter knows nothing that will throw any light at all on this mystery nor do we believe that she is even remotely connected with the case."

It was rumored late last night that Edward F. Sands, discharged secretary of William Desmond Taylor, who has been sought as a material witness in the slaying of Taylor, had been found, questioned and placed in secret custody...

Another man was being looked for last night in the person of a man whose reputation has been none too savory. While there is no direct evidence implicating him, he is one of those persons coming within that classification so frequently described in blunt police comment, "I wouldn't put it past

him."

Possible suspicion would not have turned in his direction but it had been noted by some of this fellow's acquaintances that he had not been seen in his familiar haunts since the murder. He is described as a man much easier to find than to lose and the picture colony has been whispering about him.

George Contreras of the district attorney's investigating staff, and Deputy Sheriffs Fox, Nolan and Bell, who yesterday entered the case, were in a search for this man last night. If he is not the actual murderer they expect him to tell a story which will materially advance the investigation.

An earlier development of the day, however, struck the picture colony with more amazement than this feature. It was the report that one of the big figures of the screen, a man whose sudden rise to fame has been one of the marvels of the profession, was under suspicion.

His name was first linked with the crime as a possibility to be considered because he had been paying marked attention to an actress who is known to have been one of Taylor's most intimate friends.

Then came the reminder that the man in question answers the physical characteristics of the assassin whom Mrs. Douglas MacLean saw leaving Taylor's apartment shortly after a shot had been heard.

It was further recalled that this man often wore a dark silk scarf, such as that figuring in Mrs. MacLean's description, and also a cap.

However, it was learned last night that this man had voluntarily offered to account for every minute of his time on Wednesday night.

It is stated in this connection that the actor has explained a telephone conversation he had with Taylor two days before the murder.

The woman whose name has been mentioned professes entire ignorance as to both the motive and the facts of the crime...

Captain Adams yesterday declared that an arrest would be made within twenty-four hours, probably less.

"Working secretly, and while the suspected murderer believed that suspicion was falling on another person," he said, "detectives from my office

have woven a chain of evidence that we believe is unbreakable.

"The net of evidence about this man is tightening like the inexorable tentacles of a deep sea monster. The motive has been established, the activities of the suspect have been checked to the night of the murder and detectives will locate his hiding place easily when the links in the chain are complete.

"A woman may have been, and possibly was, the indirect cause of the crime, but no woman directed the murderer in this case."

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February 5, 1922

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

"Dapper Don" Collins Involved in Murder Tangle of Film Man

Los Angeles, Feb. 4--"Dapper Don" Collins, "blackmailer of the century," is being sought here today as the man who murdered William Desmond Taylor, noted film director.

Collins, known from one end of the country to the other as the head of a blackmail syndicate, last was in the public eye in Philadelphia, where he eluded Federal detectives seeking him as the head of a band of liquor smugglers. He had earlier been in difficulty with the police there after his band was broken up there, and several of his lieutenants jailed...

"Dapper Don" answers, even to the checkered cap, the description of the man seen by Mrs. Douglas MacLean as he walked away from the Taylor home after the murder, the detectives declare.

Collins recently was sought here in a blackmail case. According to records in this case, he attempted to force a prominent motion picture actress to act as a lure in a blackmailing plot. She put him off and then consulted her attorney. When she again attempted to "stall" him, however, the man became enraged, struck her over the face and departed. Not desiring publicity, the actress did not swear out a complaint against him.

It is said that the fugitive, thwarted in his efforts to make the actress work for him, had vowed to kill a prominent motion picture man. Whether the man whose life was threatened was an actor or a director, the police could not learn. This incident had been apparently forgotten until the Taylor murder this week.

Interviews with Mary Miles Minter: The Pre-Taylor Years

Issue 32 of TAYLOROLOGY contains reprinted interviews with Mary Miles Minter which were conducted between the time she first met Taylor in 1919 and his death in 1922. Other issues of TAYLOROLOGY (11, 12, 37, 58) reprinted some later interviews with Minter, given after his death. Below are some interviews with Minter which were conducted from 1912-1919, before she met Taylor and when she was between the ages 9 and 17. One of her interesting comments was "King Arthur is my ideal man"--indicating her romantic predisposition toward an individual such as Taylor (mature, British, distinguished, chivalrous, leader).

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March 1912
A. P.
THE THEATRE

Nine Years Young and a Near Star

"Who taught you to act?"

A plump little girl, with a round, firm muscled face, a round little body, and candid blue eyes, which reminded me of my last and biggest far-away doll, looked up from the playhouse in her dressing room, and considered.

While she is considering, let me explain how a playhouse can be in a dressing-room, while the reverse is usually true. The chief object of her attention was a playhouse within a playhouse. Playing now, she was about to play. At the moment she had an audience of two--her grandmother and me.

A quarter hour later she would be playing to an audience of twelve hundred persons, or the capacity of the Liberty Theatre.

The playhouse of her greater interest was a square table, not quite so high as her shoulders; in fact, at the height which Shakespeare prescribed for a loving maiden, "as high as the heart." There were a tiny bedstead, a miniature sofa, some minute chairs, several infinitesimal platters, and over them presided a wee black doll named Sally Ann, in honor of Mamie Lincoln's Topsy-like part in the play. Between the question and answer an order, in a piping, childish voice, was sent over the today telephone in the little playhouse for "some good meat,--and cauliflower,--and sugar."

Her household duties finished, Juliet Shelby, standing within arm's reach of Victoria, a doll that looked herself, and Hallowe'en, a rakish looking male playfellow, and Katherine, the disreputable remnant of what was once a doll, whose stage name is Susan Jemima, but whose title in private life is Katherine, and who sat in a row on the long table of her dressing-room, made answer:

"Everybody in the companies begins to teach me to act. Then they stop, as Daddy--that's William Farnum--did, and Mr. Al Woods--that's my manager--did, and say, 'Go ahead, Juliet, and play it in your own way.'

"Oh, yes, I like being an actress. My sister Margaret is an actress. She's blacker, I mean she's a brunette. She has black eyes and dark hair, and she's two years older than me. I wish they would take Margaret into the company, and let her play 'The Littlest Rebel' one night, or one week, and me play it the next. Then sister and I could always be together, and play as much as we like--play keep house, I mean. I told Mr. Woods that, and he said: 'Not such a bad idea for a kid. I'll think about it.'

"My days are just like any other little girl's. I go from here with mamma--that's what I call my grandma. My mother is with my sister--they've

been playing in an awful failure. We go home to our flat at One Hundred and Twelfth Street as soon as the play is over, eleven o'clock. I have a cup of chocolate and a cracker, and go to bed. I get up next day about eleven and have a light breakfast. My mother makes it for me when she is at home-- French toast with hot milk over it. Then I play with my sister, if she's there; if she isn't, mother or mamma play with me until luncheon. My lunch is some soup and a piece of beef, because they make me strong. Then I go out on Riverside Drive, and walk, and run, and play for two hours. I come back and spend two hours with my governess, studying reading and writing, and geography and arithmetic. I'm going to study French. After my lessons I have my dinner, any kind of a dinner that any other little girl would like, except that I don't care for candy, nor pie, nor cake. That's at five. Then it's time to come to the theatre. I like to get here early, about six, so that I don't have to hurry, and can play house a long time before the curtain goes up."

She looked as grave and reflective when I asked her what she had played before "The Littlest Rebel," which Edward Peple had expanded from a sketch for her, as any adult actress recounting her conquests, season after season.

"I played first in 'Cameo Kirby,'" she said. She lifted the tiny gold locket, with a hint of a diamond at its centre. "The star, Mr. Goodwin, gave it to me. I was with 'The Master Key' and with Mme. Kalich in 'The Woman of Today,' and in stock companies out West, and with Mr. Hilliard in 'A Fool There Was.'" A tender glance at the bald and disreputable doll remnant. "And Katherine has been with me in all of them. Two of the plays were failures, and between them I went to school."

Juliet has a brief record. You can't unroll many events in nine years, if you happen to start as a baby. She was born in Shreveport, La. Her grandmother, Mary Miles, is an actress. Her mother, Charlotte Shelby, is likewise. That is all, except that she has accumulated fifty-nine dolls, and her sister has fifty-six. The overwhelming doll family occupies a room in the One Hundred and Twelfth Street flat. Her stage name was Mary Miles Minter, until at family council it was decided to return to her own name,

Juliet Shelby.

"I don't think I would like to play Juliet, though," she said, thoughtfully. "You know where she says, 'He has left no poison for me,' and stabs herself. I wouldn't like to stab myself. If I were dead, what would my dollies do?"

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March 18, 1916

Genevieve Harris

MOTOGRAPHY

"The Littlest Rebel" Wants to be Big

"The Littlest Rebel," of stage fame, is growing up! Mary Miles Minter, the famed child actress who played with William and Dustin Farnum, and who is now a star in Metro pictures, gives evidence of being a bit of a rebel in real life.

"I like the pictures, but I do not like to play the roles they have given me. They are dreadful!" So says Mary, whom audiences love when they see her as "Emmy," or "Dimples," or some other personification of sweet innocence. Well, they had better enjoy these pictures while they may, for the little star is going to turn her talent into another channel just as soon as she can.

"I want a serious play, of real life, one with a strong, vital story. I don't like these 'dear little girl' parts."

This was not exactly the sort of an interview I expected to have with Mary Miles Minter. The little girl who greeted me at the door, her bright curls framing a mischievous little face, might have stepped out of the film stories she makes so entertaining. She had come to Chicago to appear with her pictures in several of Alfred Hamburger's theaters, and, though she was a busy girl that morning, she would tell me about her work. So, between interruptions of telephone calls regarding a photographer's appointment, we talked of pictures and picture plays.

"Pictures are harder to work in than the real stage," "Why?" Her answer unconsciously set forth her attitude toward her work. "Because when a picture is taken, it stays that way, and you can't go over it and make it better. When I watch myself in pictures, I usually sit like this." Mary illustrated, with clenched fists and tense lips.

"How I'd like to take that little girl and shake her and make her do it all differently. That's why I call picture acting hard, because you can't remedy your mistakes in your next performance."

"But isn't it more interesting to play in pictures? You have something new to do all the time," I suggested.

"No, the stage is just as interesting, because you are always trying to do your part better."

Just what kind of a girl is this, who takes her work so seriously, and who does not like to be admired for her charm alone? Just at the present time, she is a very friendly, unaffected little fourteen-year-old carefully taken care of by her charming mother, and the note of sincerity adds charm to a bright, vivacious personality. She has more poise and grace than most young ladies of her age, but with it there is just a touch of unexpected shyness which tells you that a public career has not robbed her of her childhood.

It came time for the photographer's appointment, and I arose to leave. "Just a minute. I want to show you the nicest gifts I've received lately," and she ran away to bring back a rich traveling bag, beautifully outfitted, and a tiny camera of English make. "The Canadians gave them to me. I've been appearing in Canada, you know, with my pictures, making speeches," she laughed. "Aren't these the prettiest things? And how I loved Canada and the cold weather." She was bubbling over with the unaffected delight of a child.

Then it was past time to go. "Good-bye," said Mary, "but I'll see you again, for I'm going back to Chicago in a real play. I think I can do better work on the stage than in pictures."

"She is like a little sunbeam," said Mr. Hamburger.

"She is," I said, but I was thinking of the serious spirit which shone in her frank blue eyes and which make one believe that she will climb to the goal

she has set for herself, above ingenue roles, above the pedestal of the child star, way up to the heights of being a great actress.

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March 19, 1916
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Mary Miles Minter Wants to Keep Busy

One approaches so young a film star as Mary Miles Minter for an interview with a good deal of trepidation. Should you have brought along a stick of peppermint candy as a bid for the good graces of the lady; or, on the other hand, will she be a precocious child with the manners and airs of a woman of forty?

All these doubts were dispelled before half a dozen words had been exchanged. Miss Minter, is, for a wonder, just the age that the publicity man claims, which is not quite fourteen, and she makes no attempt to appear anything else. One might think her a little older, because the experience of being a motion picture star has broadened her and given her an assurance that less talented girls have not had the opportunity of acquiring, yet she is above all simple and unassuming.

"I don't think I shall ever become very conceited," declared Miss Minter, "because every time I start to be I get a hard knock. Either the director takes it out of me or my mother lectures me, so that whenever I am inclined to think well of myself I can be sure there's a puncture coming."

Moreover, Miss Minter is not satisfied with her screen work, which is a good sign that self-satisfaction has not consumed her utterly.

"You probably don't believe a word about my age," she continued. "I always hesitate about telling it when any one asks me, because it sounds as though I were proud of it, but in reality I'm not. I have always felt old, never younger than thirteen. Even when I was much younger than I am now I

could always sit up and converse with much older people. It seems to be a family trait, and isn't due to any effort on my part, so why should I take any credit for it?"

Miss Minter sat in a low chair, playing with her two dogs, Metro and Dick, short for Richard Rowland, president of the Metro Company. Catching the interviewer's glance at her hands, which fluttered ceaselessly about the animals, she spread them apart in a theatrical gesture.

"Register despair," she remarked. "Mother tells me to 'cultivate repose of manner,' but it doesn't do any good. I have to keep moving all the time. Somebody once tried to compliment me by saying that it denoted temperament, but that's silly. I guess it's just nervousness. I'm that way mentally, too. Of course, I work pretty hard at the studio, and then I tutor in lots of things, including French and German, and what little time is left I spend out of doors if possible."

She pointed through the window at a snowy street that sloped down toward the Hudson. "This Winter I've done lots of coasting on that hill, and I'm strong enough to take the boys' sleds away from them, which is lots of fun, because it makes them so angry. You don't know how strong I am. You see, I'm crazy about jiu jitsu, and have been taking lessons in it for some time. Also I like to box, because then I have an excuse to wave my arms about as much as I want to."

Miss Minter look threateningly at the interviewer, but finally decided not to fracture the laws of hospitality, so she continued:

"I can manage my sister Margaret quite easily, and she's sixteen, but there's never any reason for demonstrating that fact. We are very different, but I don't believe we've ever had a serious quarrel, only sometimes at night, when I want the light left on to read by, and she wants it off so that she can sleep, we keep popping it on and off for hours."

Miss Minter has the great gift of appearing animated and interested in everything that she does, and this is one of the secrets of her screen popularity. She has the intense enthusiasm of youth, which no one can duplicate by mere acting, and it is as apparent on the screen as off. In

fact, Mary Miles Minter of the motion picture is no different from the Juliet Shelby of real life.

Miss Minter does not consider screen acting as great an art as playing on the legitimate stage.

"I appeared first on the stage, you know," she said, "and I want to get back to it. My work before the camera is very interesting, of course, but I remain true to my first love. It is really all a matter of opinion, but to me legitimate stage work is the highest form of histrionic art. I suppose it's because I was brought up to it. But there is one thing that I should miss if I gave up my picture work, and that is the traveling. I have gone to so many places and met so many nice people, all the way from Florida to the Pacific Coast, that I really have a large number of friends. The people out West are the most hospitable that I have ever met. Still, I want to go back to the stage.

"The trouble is I'm too particular about parts. It is hard to find a play that suits the sort of acting I can do best, and want to do. A story like 'The Littlest Rebel,' in which I played with Dustin Farnum, can't be picked up every day. Margaret is cut out for comedy, but I prefer drama, but not of the gushy and sentimental kind.

"I go to the theatre as often as I can, and try to get pointers from the actresses that I see. That all helps, whether for the screen or stage, and I know that I shall go on acting in one form or another so long as I can. Lots of girls seem to enjoy having nothing to do, but if I had to sit around with nothing to occupy my time I know I should go insane."

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November 1917
Catherine Dick
PHOTO-PLAY WORLD

Just and Hour or Two with Mary Miles Minter

You get a glimpse of Holland at the American Film Company at Santa Barbara, in the dressing rooms of Mary Miles Minter, the youngest real-for-sure screen star on the electric signs.

Mary is so lovely herself that she just naturally calls for a complimentary setting and the American Film Company have spared no pains in surrounding her with the beauty that her youth and vivacity demands.

"Come in," she said, cheerfully. That's one nice thing about Miss Minter--she is never bored with her visitors or with the fact that she is a popular favorite with the picture fans. She enjoys it with the zest of youth. She enjoys visitors. She enjoys almost everything but having her picture taken and this she regards as punishment.

"Takes all our energy to drag Mary to the camera," said her mother, with an indulgent smile. Guess she can afford to be put out occasionally, with such a charming child as Mary Miles Minter in the family.

But Mary really does not like to be photographed, personally.

"It takes the whole family to make her behave properly," chimed in her big sister Margaret, who is getting to be a screen personality herself. "Mother usually goes to bed for the day after a camera seance with Mary for her personal pictures, and when it is all over Mary shakes herself like a pup coming out of the water, and declares that that batch must last for the rest of her days."

We wouldn't dast, ourselves, to liken Mary to a pup coming out of the water; but her own sister said it and Mary backed her up by imitating her camera shake, and honest, it was so like a cunning little toy dog with its water shake after a bath that everybody laughed.

"Look at my new decorations," said Mary, proudly, "Aren't they heavenly?"

The upper walls and ceiling of the room are tinted a warm ivory to match the old-fashioned Dutch furniture. Plain blue tapestry paper covers the lower walls, topped by an eighteen-inch border, also in blue, depicting Dutch scenes in story form. Blue hangings in a Dutch design combined with sheer, dotted Swiss muslin are used at the window and a rare old blue rag run is on

the floor.

The dressing table is a work of art. On it is a hand-maid toilet set in Dutch design, that attracted my attention.

"Isn't that a beauty?" said Miss Minter, touching one or two of the pieces, lovingly. "That toilet set is the apple of my eye. The boys in the technical department gave that to me. Aren't they darlings to think of it?"

If Miss Minter did not have to bother with modish gowns, she would be a happy girl. Living the simple life is not at all a pose with her. She realizes that clothes are part of her business as a screen star with a large following; but she is always glad when she can hang up her exquisite gowns in the wardrobe and turn them over to the care of the maid, while she enjoys herself in plain little gowns that only enhance her appeal. Miss Minter's beauty does not need beautiful clothes to bring it out. She is far more fetching in a shabby little gingham frock, with her curls tumbling down her back than she is in a chiffon dinner gown or silk ball gown.

For here's something you'd never guess. I would not have believed it unless I had seen it myself on Mary's classic little nose. And it looks so fetching that even Mary herself cannot consider having it removed.

Mary has freckles!

Yes, sir. And proud of 'em.

She contemplates those tiny brown beauty spots with great affection and wouldn't lose one of 'em for the world. She says it keeps alive in her the sensation that she is a regular girl--those freckles. There are only two or three, or course, but they are freckles, nevertheless.

"I want to be a regular, everyday girl," she announced, looking at a freckle with great friendship, in the gay Dutch hand mirror.

"Now, isn't that a nice, sociable freckle? Who would want to have that taken off with lemon juice and buttermilk. No siree, that freckle stays."

As for the clothes--to go back to them--her mother chooses most of her gowns. Mary doesn't care what she wears. She should worry.

"I want my clothes comfortable and then I want to forget them," she said.

Her mother sighed again.

"We went to Los Angeles, recently," she began, "and went the rounds of the shops to buy something really smart. The saleswomen were interested in Mary, of course, and brought out all kinds of artistic designs to please her."

"But there isn't anything I want, exactly," explained Miss Minter, to a disappointed girl, who sure did want to be able to say that she had sold some gowns to the popular screen star. "I want 'glad dresses.' Those frocks you showed me look so cold, and formal, and haughty. Haven't you something 'glad and happy' in gowns?"

The salesgirl knew exactly what Mary wanted and soon had the little star arrayed in a creation that was both smart and "glad."

Mary nibbled her favorite fruit--an apple--while her mother told this incident.

"I want everything around me glad," she admitted. "I don't like to see even a frown in my direction. Why not be happy all the time. It's lots more fun to make people happy than to make them sad, isn't it? That's why I like the comedy parts in my stories so well, I love to see people laugh."

"Did you hear the story about the turtle?" asked Mrs. Shelby, as I rose to depart. An hour had been allotted me and already I had loafed away an hour and a half in the luxurious dressing room, chatting with Miss Minter and admiring her gowns and her collection of nifty foot-gear and the beads that are her fad--the child has almost fifty strings of beads and keeps adding to her collection all the time. Regular Egyptian princess, she is.

"Mother," she protested, "it isn't fair to make me cry again about that turtle. And if you tell that story, I know I'll cry. You see," she went on, turning to me, and gathering up her little pet kitten in her arms, "we were at the hotel and I saw a darling big turtle tied out on the back lawn. I supposed he was a pet and I went down to get acquainted with him. Next day, he was gone and another smaller turtle was there. They kept disappearing all the time until, finally, there was a big fat old chap that I called 'Caruso.' He was a darling old thing and every day I used to go down and play with him.

He grew so acquainted with me that when he saw me coming he would poke out his funny head and bob it up and down as if he really was saying 'howdy' to me. And then one day Caruso disappeared, too. I went down to the steward and asked him where Caruso was and what he was doing with all the turtles and he told me he had made soup of them!

"That night at dinner when the waiter brought my soup--"

Mrs. Shelby broke right in on the story at this point.

"Mary looked up at me with tears in her eyes," she explained, "and sobbed."

"'Oh, mother, it's Caruso!' and that ended our dinner. We had to take her out of the dining room and have her dinner sent upstairs. Even then she wept so that she could not eat a bite."

Little Mary nodded solemnly.

"I'll never eat turtle soup again," she said, mournfully, "wasn't it a shame to make Caruso into turtle soup--the old dear. I know he used to bob his darling old head at me purposely," and she danced out to a call from the director, to come and be ginghamed, little barefooted Sally, the Mate of the Sally Ann.

And then her sister Margaret told me a story that had no comedy in it at all. We were sauntering through the studio, where Mary was rehearsing and watching her put her expressive little self into the story.

"She's the coolest little thing you ever saw," said Margaret. "Not long ago we were driving along the horseshoe curve on one of the mountain drives. Mother had really forbidden us to go there; but I was driving and I thought we could make it all right. I saw a big car coming and I thought we'd better turn around and go back while the road was wide enough. The brake turned defective just then--and, to my horror, the car began sliding back to the brink. And then the engine stalled.

"I'll never be any more frightened than I was then. I called to Mary to jump; but the brave little thing refused to leave me. She just smiled and said:

"'Don't worry, sis, you'll manage all right--just keep cool.'"

"I knew I just had to get that car out, so between us we held on to the brakes until the engine could get started again and we went on to safety."

* * * * *

January 1918

Mary Miles Minter

MOTION PICTURE

I never "broke into" the movies. Mother and I "dodged" them for months; but, of course, the inevitable is sure to happen, and finally one amazingly persistent manager won mother over.

I was a wee bit of a girl, playing the title role in "The Littlest Rebel," and mother agreed to permit me to appear in just one picture, provided I was to work only on Sundays, in order not to interfere with my real work in "The Rebel." Everything was satisfactorily arranged, and I was to receive the unheard-of-salary of twenty-five dollars a day. Eventually Mr. Al Woods, the manager of "The Rebel," learnt of the arrangement and was simply wild. He had my contract rewritten, adding a clause which prevented my appearing before the camera during the run of "The Rebel," and also increasing my salary from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars a week.

After four seasons with "The Littlest Rebel" and having entirely outgrown my part, mother and I returned to New York for a new Broadway production. At this time we were besieged with tempting offers from Motion Picture producers, but mother still looked askance at the movies.

Finally, through the efforts of a mutual friend, mother consented to at least have a talk with Mr. D. W. Griffith. An appointment was made for the following morning at nine o'clock, and promptly at the hour mother and I appeared in all our glory. Accustomed as we were to the courteous and yet businesslike treatment of the all-powerful magnates of the theatrical world, we were prepared to be received in state and escorted into the presence of the great Griffith. Hundreds of people were waiting in the reception room, and occasionally the door of the sanctum sanctorum would open and some one pass

hurriedly out. As the minutes ticked by past the hour of nine, mother began to fidget. At nine she was painfully disturbed. We looked about expectantly, but no one seemed to notice us particularly. It was quite apparent that the famous Mr. D. W. Griffith was not eagerly waiting to greet us, and at 9:10 we rose haughtily and swept from the room. We had never dreamt of such a thing as "being late" for a business appointment, nor ever heard of such a thing as being "kept waiting." We then turned our backs on representatives of Motion Picture magnates, with their distressing business methods.

Some time later another agent phoned mother, pleading that she consider a contract for me with a new and very fine company just starting. Wearily mother inquired the name of the said company, and was informed that it was a Frohman project.

"One of 'the Frohmans'?" inquired mother.

The agent assured her that it was.

"That is quite a different matter," emphatically declared mother. "We will be down immediately."

A few hours later mother signed a contract with Gustave Frohman for my first picture, and within a few days we started production on "The Fairy and the Waif."

It was one of the happiest experiences we ever had; and thus the mystic shadow-drama won another follower.

* * * * *

February 1918
Elizabeth Peltret
PHOTOPLAY

The Golden Girl of the West

Mary Miles Minter did not float out on any tobacco cloud. Instead, she sat on a couch and knitted with a rapidity that proved her thoroughly expert. She was dressed in purple velvet which brought out in sharp relief the vivid

yet soft coloring of her skin and hair and eyes--a coloring that makes her more exquisitely lovely in real life than she is on the screen. She looked as if Riley had made his verse for her.

Her real name is Juliet Shelby and she was born in Shreveport, La., April 1, 1902, which makes her fifteen, "going on sixteen" years old. She became Mary Miles Minter when she was nine years old and playing in The Littlest Rebel with the Farnum brothers, Dustin and William.

"The real Mary Miles Minter was a cousin who died when she was a baby," said "Julie," as the home folks call her. "She was nine years older than I, and my mother naturally thought of her when it looked as though we would have to close the show because I wasn't sixteen years old. So, when the Gerry man came, mother showed him the birth certificate of Mary Miles Minter and said that I was Juliet Shelby's cousin. She had padded me all up beforehand, too, as I was supposed to be a dwarf. My, but we were scared. We got by all right, though, but I had to keep my cousin's name until mine was forgotten."

The fact that New York fell in love with the little girl of "The Littlest Rebel" is too well known to need mention. Not so the fact that at the time she was "no pampered, velvet-and-ermine-clad doll, whose charms are emphasized by curls," to quote the New York Dramatic Mirror of November 22, 1911, "but a ragged, straight-haired, woman-faced little one. Critically analyzed," the article goes on to say, "the visage of this small conqueror of a big city is not pretty, except in the inevitable prettiness of childhood in any state--"

Mary Miles Minter likes that clipping. It proved that radiantly beautiful as she is now, she did not walk into fame on the strength of that beauty.

"I loved 'The Littlest Rebel,'" she said. "I want to do something really dramatic in pictures--like Tennyson's 'Elaine,' for instance.

"King Arthur is my ideal man," she went on. "King Arthur or Lancelot, but really I don't like any men very much. Even King Arthur had a fault; he was so busy taking care of his Kingdom and his Table Round that he neglected his wife."

She is very girlish.

"My favorite play used to be 'Romeo and Juliet,' but it isn't any more. It seems too sentimental, somehow, and then, too, I believe so firmly in life after death--you know that Romeo and Juliet lived good lives, and that in the end they were together and happy--it really doesn't seem a bit sad to me--not a bit."

She has quick intuitive likes and dislikes and, as soon as she meets people, associates them with some color or combination of colors, that seem to suit them most. She has given colors to all the people with whom she played on the stage, going as "far" back as the time of her first appearance when she was five years old, in Cameo Kirby with Nat Goodwin and Maude Fealy.

"I can't remember what color I gave Mr. Goodwin," she said, "but Maude Fealy's was white and yellow, Mrs. Fiske was beige; Robert Hilliard, French gray, and Emily Stevens--I had a great deal of trouble giving a color to Miss Stevens. For her, I thought of marigold with a narrow stripe of violet, but I wasn't exactly sure. Mary Pickford is many different colors, but they are always warm and soft and beautiful--she is like a sunset sky. Dustin and William Farnum are very different. To William I gave russet brown and woodland green, while to Dustin I gave purple streaked with cerise. I gave Madame Bertha Kalich violet streaked with crimson." She laughed lightly. "Perhaps I put in the crimson because she got mad at me once. We made it all up afterward and I love her.

"In the play, she was supposed to be my mother and all through rehearsals I persisted in skipping when she wanted me to walk. Finally she said, 'Oh, it is true! The child CAN'T walk! Come here to me, Little One. I, Kalish, will teach you how to walk!'" (Miss Minter had laid aside her knitting and was giving a funny imitation of herself and Madame Kalich.)

"'See!' Madame Kalich went on, 'I am your mother, but you have not seen me for a long time. Come, express it, so!'"--(Showing just how Kalich wanted her to do, she took two little steps and drew back a little, then three little steps and drew back a little, finishing up in a run.) "It wasn't natural for me to do it that way," she went on. "Madame rehearsed me again and again, but I wanted to skip and so I could not--or would not--do it right. Anyway, I

didn't skip on the night of the performance; I walked, but not--oh, no--as Kalich wanted me to! I held my knees as stiff as if they were sticks--(she illustrated with telling effect)--it broke Kalich all up and she was furious. 'The child have ruin everyt'ing,' she said. 'She have deser-r-crate my art!'

"All of us get mad when we have some good cause for it. I can remember just as well how mad I got at Maude Fealy because she used one of my socks as a handkerchief, and I was only about five years old. It was during Cameo Kirby. Miss Fealy had a dreadful cold, she had mislaid her handkerchief, and had only a few seconds before it was time for her to go on. She was looking around desperately, when she spied Mama standing there with a pair of my socks. 'Oh, give me that, please,' she said and snatched one of them. I had to go on 'sockless!'

"Here, at the studio, everything goes like clockwork," she remarked. "I'm living the most monotonous life."

Her days are, for the most part, spent at the studio, and her evenings at lessons. She is taking music (vocal and piano), French and literature, and has three tutors, giving two nights a week to each. Even in as small a city as Santa Barbara, she is personally very little known, outside of the Hotel Arlington where she lives with her mother, grandmother, and her beautiful brunette sister, Margaret Shelby. But, of course, Mary Miles Minter is none the less a favorite subject of conversation and some of the things said about her would make good plots for scenarios. For instance, one day Margaret Shelby was sitting next to some of the inhabitants of Montecito, the millionaire colony, in a picture show, when she heard one say:

"Mary Miles Minter is thir-r-rty-nine years old; you'd never think it, would you?"

"Oh, I don't know!" said the other. "They hide it with make-up, you know."

"She looks so dainty," said the first. "But really, she is quite ignorant and uneducated. She was born in New York on the east side. Her father was a common drunk, and her mother had to scrub office floors for a living. At last, her father disappeared and her mother died--of exhaustion,

probably. She was adopted by a neighbor almost as poor as her parents had been. This neighbor took care of her until she was about sixteen years old. Then a show girl saw her, noticed her beauty and got her a place in the chorus. She worked herself up from there, gradually. Remarkable, isn't it?"

Margaret Shelby thought that it was remarkable. For a moment she had an intense desire to enlighten them, but she didn't. "It would really have done no good," she said.

As a matter of fact, Mary Miles Minter is descended from a famous pioneer and Indian fighter, Gen. Isaac Shelby, who became the first Governor of Kentucky and she never suffered,, even the least little bit, from poverty.

She has a fervid ambition, is direct, earnest and sincere.

"I know that I will do big things," she said. The sentence was, of course, without a trace of egotism. She was ignoring the fact that her name is famous all over the world. "I have my wagon hitched to the very highest star of all and I'm determined to get there and sit right on top of it, some day."

It was just as we were leaving; and Mary called us back.

"Yes?"

"I wonder if I might write a little letter to the people who have been so kind to me--send them a little message through PHOTOPLAY?"

We agreed that it would be very nice indeed; and Mary disappeared for some minutes. When she came back she handed me the letter, with a little smile, half-shy, half-triumphant.

"Dear Friends Everywhere:

"I'm writing to you, care PHOTOPLAY MAGAZINE, because I want to tell you all that I've been hoping to tell you for a long, long time.

"You know, when I was on the stage, I was pleased with my little success. But I never dreamed that some day I would have so many friends. You have made me very happy; and I shall do my best to please you always.

"Perhaps by the time this reaches you, Christmas will have come and gone. But the thought is uppermost in my mind, and I wish you all the merriest Christmas possible, and the happiest New Year.

"Your friend from Shadow-Land,
"Mary Miles Minter."

* * * * *

August 1918

Ellen Chapman

MOTION PICTURE CLASSIC

[from an interview with Minter]...I learnt, too, that Mary bitterly resents the use of her family name, Juliet Shelby, by any one outside her family or intimate circle of friends. "To the world I wish to be Mary Miles Minter," she declared. "And the public has no more right to intrude on the intimacy of my family name than it has to enter my home and peer into my closets."

...In our little exchange of confidences that day out in the silent hills, I peeked into a little chamber in Mary's heart which I feel sure very few know of. We were speaking of her life as compared to the life of other girls of her age. Mary stared out over the valley with unseeing eyes and spoke almost unconsciously.

"I sometimes envy other girls," she said, "even the poorer girls who cannot always have everything they want. I envy them their home life, safe from the public's curious star. I envy them the companionship of other girls their age; some one to play with; some one to have secrets with. Girls just won't get chummy with me. When I meet them and try to be friendly, they star at me, round-eyed with awe. They never think of telling me their secrets or asking me about mine. To them I am ALWAYS Mary Miles Minter, the actress; they forget that I'm, first, just a girl. In my whole life long I've had only one or two girl or boy friends."...

* * * * *

May 4, 1919

Louella Parsons
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

[from an interview with Minter]..."I haven't had a vacation in nine years," said Mary in a plaintive voice. "Let me see, not since I was a little girl playing on the stage, and I am so tired."

"She is nearly dead," repeated her mother. "I want her to dance and shop and play like other girls her age, and forget work."

"Just think," interrupted Mary, "I have never had a checkbook, even. I differ from the other picture stars in that I do not smoke, I do not drink and I never owned a checkbook."

"You had one once, darling," said her mother. "Remember when I gave you a checkbook, showed you how to use it and came away and left you to run things?"

Mary did remember and laughed rather shame-facedly. "But I was tiny, then," she said.

"Let me tell you what she did," explained her mother. "I left plenty of money in the bank, gave her a checkbook and told her to pay the bills. When I came back nary a bill had been paid and all the money spent."

"How did she spend it?" I asked, "on dolls, clothes or parties?"

"Mercy, no," said her mother; "on deformed Chinese babies, and for the saving of the colored people, the missionaries in Hindu, and Heavens knows what."

"But, mother, you know very well those poor Chinese babies were left in the field to die, and I couldn't bear it," defended Mary...

* * * * *

March 1920
Hazel Simpson Naylor
MOTION PICTURE

The Golden Girl

What a lure in the word gold! Gold, the open sesame to happiness; gold, for which men in their prime have died; gold, for which brothers have slain one another; gold, for which women have bartered their souls; gold, gold, gold--cold, hard, and yet ever beckoning with its yellow glitter, offering the open doorway to happiness.

I can hear you ask, if this be true, why do I call Mary Miles Minter the Golden Girl.

Because, in her way, she is all gold. Her young personality seems to offer all great things--just as unlimited gold holds out the promise of happiness.

Rumor has it that this little lady's new contract with Realart forbids her giving interviews. If this be true and not mere press agent junk, I was lucky, for I spent a busy afternoon with her a day or so before she placed her highly valued signature to the new scrap of paper.

Mary Miles Minter, whose real name of Juliet I found much more suitable, has the divine enthusiasm and ambition of youth, combined with periods of depression, which are equally a proof of her youth and her genius. She is, to a certain extent, a little rebel.

For her snappy blue eyes flash with anger and her whole mobile little face tells the story of her feelings when she tempestuously talks about the past year.

"All last year I never did anything worth while," she cried, protestingly. "Look at the namby-pamby stories they gave me! I told them I wanted to do real things, stories with a problem or lesson in them, stories that gave me a real chance to do something. After I saw each one projected; I cried--cried over them. I said I wouldn't do any more. What happened? Everybody patted me on the back and told me to be a sweet little girl and that they knew the type of part that suited me best. Consequently I went on, doing nothing worth while, just a set of sugary program pictures! I tell you, I'd rather die than go on doing stuff like that."

Juliet's eyes fairly flashed her indignation. Youth, I thought, youth and outraged genius.

"It's the same way with my hats, my gowns, my shoes," continued this electric youngster. "MOTHER always picks them out for me. Mother always decides what is best for me. Mind you, mother is a wonder, I couldn't even breathe without her, but oh, dear, I WOULD like to pick out my own hats!"

What girl of seventeen or eighteen hasn't experienced that identical feeling at one time or another? Every week Mary Miles Minter earns thousands of dollars, and yet her whole soul agonizes with a desire to select her own hat. The delicious unhappiness of youth!

"What DO you want to play?" I cried, beginning to feel with the same intensity of the little live wire sitting beside me and wishing that the camera could catch the wonderful animation of her face in real life.

"Oh, dear," she cried, jumping up uneasily and coming back to our davenport with a box of candy very nearly as large as herself, "do have some candy. If mother were here, she would never let me talk this way, but I tell you, if I don't do something worth while in the next year, I want to either die or leave the screen. I mean it. I can't bear this mediocre stuff. If there is anything in me, it is time I did something. If I don't do something big now, I never will. I couldn't bear standing still. I've got to go on-- or DIE. I want to do 'Romeo and Juliet,' or something equally big. Why will picture audiences be satisfied with namby-pamby stuff? That is one reason I want to go back on the stage, the opportunity for real portrayals is so much greater."

Mary Miles Minter has no false vanity. She is not the type of girl who goes around with a powder puff in her hand. She is not a perfection of grooming or a product of hours spent under a maid's tutelage. She is too vivid, too colorful, too full of life to be restricted in any way.

Her golden curls were pinned in a loose knot to her prettily shaped head and they bobbed and danced wildly with each vehement gesture that accompanied her burning words. Her soft, simply made dress of silk didn't quite meet where it should, but she curled her feet under her and chatted on, sublimely unconscious of her looks. She is small, tiny-boned but beautifully rounded. She thinks she would like to be taller and openly enthused because I was

shorter than she.

In spite of her care-free girlishness, this Juliet-Mary possesses a very sweet dignity which holds forth the promise of splendid womanhood. During my stay she brought in her grandmother and her sister that I might meet them and introduced them with quaint pride. I have never heard anything sweeter or more womanly than the way she said with bated breath that she thought the greatest thing in life must be to be married to the man you loved and have babies.

"Of course," she added, "I am too young to think of such things and mother wouldn't like me to talk about it, but oh, I do think it would be wonderful, more wonderful than all the fame and money in the world, to have babies of one's very own. That's what God put us on this earth for, after all, didn't He?"

I nodded. Such a moment in a cynical world was too holy for speech.

Then I watched Mary as she was called to manage several business matters over the telephone. She took care of them with a poise lacking in many an accomplished woman. She met one of the reporters of the great dailies and recounted her life's history dutifully.

And when all had been attended to and we were at last alone again, she brimmed over with joy and enthusiasm because it was time to get dressed for dinner and the theater and the rare treat which mamma had promised her--a real cabaret!

I hope Realart will give my Golden Girl the opportunity she deserves, for it is indeed seldom that one meets an ingenue with the brains of Mary Miles Minter, the beauty--and the genius. She is--truthfully, in spite of her early triumphs, an uncoined mine of gold.

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Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 62 -- February 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Four

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the fourth day after Taylor's body was discovered.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

Suspect, Two Witnesses Questioned by Police

Following the detention earlier in the day of a suspect and two material witnesses in the Taylor murder case, the escape of the slayer of William Desmond Taylor from the dimly-lighted court on South Alvarado street was re-enacted last night in the very shadows where the murderer lurked last Wednesday night awaiting his chance to kill the famous film director.

The dramatic action was precipitated by the taking into custody of three men by Al Manning, criminal superintendent of the Sheriff's office, and Deputy Sheriff Harvey Bell. The suspect and the two men who were wanted as material witnesses against him were detained after an investigation lasting two days, and as the result of information that an automobile said to resemble one owned by the suspect was seen at the scene of the crime on the night of the 1st inst.

The suspect was taken to the scene of the crime after a long cross-examination at the Sheriff's office, and after he was unable to state definitely where he was at the time Taylor was killed. Accompanied by his captor and Detective Sergeant Herman H. Cline, the man was taken to the vicinity of the slaying for the purpose of re-enacting the tragedy. No positive identification was made, however, and the man was released, with instructions to remain in touch with the investigating officers. The suspect is a motion-picture actor. He admitted the ownership of the automobile, but denied he was the man seen leaving the Alvarado street court.

Immediately after the suspect was taken away from the vicinity, Capt. Adams, Detectives Cline, Cahill and Cato, in charge of the investigation, and several members of the motion-picture interests, now working in an effort to solve the slaying of one of their members went into conference in the Taylor apartment.

A new reconstruction of the crime, and a general checking up of all known facts and factors in the case was the purpose of the gathering, according to the announcement by the officers and by Frank E. Garbutt and Charles F. Eyton,

general manager of the Famous Players-Lasky Company.

"We are going to take every known fact and factor and check all available information. We have nothing new, but we want to make certain of all we have," was the only announcement after the conference.

The large table in the Taylor apartment was piled high with papers and letters when the officers and film officials went into the conference. A thorough check of every document, picture, telegram and letter was promised, with a view of gleaning, if possible, some clew that would assist in the search for the slayer. None of the furniture in the room has been disturbed.

The half-dozen detectives detailed to the solution of the crime yesterday were particularly active. The chocolate-colored automobile seen to leave the vicinity of the Taylor home at 404-B South Alvarado street has been identified, it was learned, and eliminated as bearing on the case.

Henry Peavey, colored houseman for Mr. Taylor, and the man who found the body, yesterday was in conference with some of the detectives.

He is declared to have wanted to leave Los Angeles to go north and sought permission to do so. He is said to have added little new information to the case. Peavey left the Taylor home while Mabel Normand was there and more than a half hour before the assassin shot his victim through the heart.

Many letters, bills and other correspondence found among the effects of Mr. Taylor were closely examined during the day for possible information. Among those letters were messages of greeting and friendly notes from many film stars including Blanche Sweet and Gloria Swanson.

The correspondence and other papers including many canceled checks threw considerable light on the acquaintances and activities of Mr. Taylor but little on the question of who shot him.

Detectives Cahill and Cato responded to a "hot tip" early in the afternoon coming from a downtown address but nothing definite developed. A great number of "tips" have been reported to the police station and although many of them are not regarded as valuable on the surface all are being carefully checked that no clew be overlooked.

Throughout all the investigation thus far the name of Edward F. Sands or

Edward Fitz or Edward Fitz Strathmore--all of which names he used-0-has been prominently projected into the mystery. Sands, a former secretary who was accused of robbing Mr. Taylor and of forging many checks on his bank account, is being sought.

The police are anxious to find him because of the knowledge he may have of Mr. Taylor's past life. The uncovering of the dual existence led by the prominent director, whose name became a household word throughout the country, has strangely muddled the situation. Many new motives and possibilities have been brought to the front because of Taylor's dual life and mysterious past.

The discovery of a deserted wife and daughter who knew Mr. Taylor as William Cunningham Deane Taylor [sic] before he suddenly left New York in 1908 has been one of the puzzling chapters in the man's past life. His frequent trips to the Far North also add color to many theories of real or fancied wrongs of his acquaintances in his wandering days forming the background of a revenge slaying.

Mabel Normand's missing letters were sought by the detectives yesterday. Miss Normand probably the last friend to see Mr. Taylor alive, attempted Saturday to recover some letters written by her to the slain man and known to have been in the home.

Detective Sergeants Herman Cline, Cato, Cahill, Winn, Wallace and Zeigler state they have not found these letters. Captain of Detectives Adams also denies having them. The officers say they do not know who has them. Chief Dep. Dist.-Atty. Doran says also that he has seen nothing of them.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Says He Loved Miss Normand.
But Taylor's Houseman Hints He Was Scorned.
More Light is Thrown on Relations of Two.
Once Said They Were to be Married, He States.

"Mr. Taylor loved Miss Normand very much, but I do not believe that she returned his love to any great extent."

This is what Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored house servant, said early yesterday evening when questioned by reporters of The Times.

"I was in Mr. Taylor's house for almost six months," declared Peavey, "and I know that Mr. Taylor was very much in love with Miss Normand. At times I thought that she returned his love and then again it seemed to me that she was tired of him.

"One night almost a month before Mr. Taylor was killed Miss Normand came to the house for dinner. After dinner she went into the front room with Mr. Taylor and they were talking. I passed through the room and she stopped me. She told me then that she and Mr. Taylor were to be married. He was sitting there and didn't say a word. She wanted to know if I would work for them and I told her that I was afraid that I would be unable to please her. She stated that I was pleasing Mr. Taylor and that therefore I would please her.

"Miss Normand never came to the house very often. During the time I worked there she was only in Mr. Taylor's home about a dozen times. She was there the night before the murder and again the night that Mr. Taylor was killed. I know that she was with Mr. Taylor on the Tuesday night, before the Wednesday that he was killed, because she told me so. Wednesday night when she came in Mr. Taylor asked her to have some pudding. She said while I was in the room that she did not care for any pudding that night, but had enjoyed the pudding that she had the night before. Then I learned for the first time what had happened to some pudding that I had left in the ice box on Tuesday night and that was gone Wednesday morning when I arrived at the Taylor home.

"In my job as houseman I was in a position to know quite a bit about Mr. Taylor's business. He wrote a letter to Miss Normand almost every day of the week. His driver would take the notes to Miss Normand's home by automobile after breakfast in the mornings. A week never went by that he did not write to her at least three times.

"Mr. Taylor always sent Miss Normand flowers at least three times a week.

He purchased the flowers from a wholesale place on Los Angeles street between Second and Third streets. Once I paid for some of them, the single bunch cost \$35. He would have the flowers sent out from the wholesale house direct.

"While Miss Normand was in New York finishing her last picture Mr. Taylor send her a telegram every evening of his life. He would give them to me and I sent them on my way home. I always gave them to the same girl in the Western Union main office. She is still working there. Miss Normand answered his telegrams and almost every morning just after I arrived at the Taylor home the boy would come with Miss Normand's telegram. Mr. Taylor saved them all, but I don't know where he kept them.

"I remember one evening when Miss Normand was with Mr. Taylor in his home she saw his new music box and while I was in the room she asked him if they were going to have one like it when they were married. He told her that they would keep the one he had just purchased if she liked it.

"A year ago last Christmas Miss Normand gave Mr. Taylor a set of diamond shirt studs and diamond cuff links. Last Christmas she sent him a large silver cigarette case and a match holder and a cigarette holder. Some time after Christmas the match and cigarette holder disappeared, but he had the case on him the night that he died. I don't know what Mr. Taylor gave Miss Normand for Christmas, but I know that he was always sending her something or other.

"Mr. Taylor used to talk to Miss Normand over the telephone a great deal. He always asked me to get the number for him. Sometimes some one would answer me and when I said that Mr. Taylor wished to speak to Miss Normand they would hang up the telephone. It was then that I would believe that Miss Normand did not care for my master like he did for her.

"Only once during the time that I worked for Mr. Taylor did Miss Normand ask me about other girls. She stopped me once when she was in the home and ask me what other girls had dinner with Mr. Taylor. I told her that there was only one. She ask me who the one was an I told, Miss Normand. She laughed at me and said that Mr. Taylor had me well trained.

"Miss Normand was with Mr. Taylor the last time I saw him alive. My

master asked me to mix up some cocktails and I did. I placed the liquor in the shaker on a tray with two glasses and Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand were drinking when I left for the evening. They both said good night to me and I left the house. When I next saw Mr. Taylor he was dead on the floor of his living-room."

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February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Woman's Night Robe in House

Silk Garment at Taylor's Home Adds to Mystery

Former Servant Accused of Spying on Employer

Gown Not Merely Keepsake, Was Servant's Theory

A woman's pink silk nightgown found in the bachelor apartments of William Desmond Taylor, celebrated film director, who was slain in his home last Wednesday night, yesterday added another puzzling phase to the deepening mystery of circumstances surrounding his death.

From former employees of Mr. Taylor it was learned that silken things unknown in a man's wardrobe were among the effects of Mr. Taylor. That the police found evidence of this was learned for the first time yesterday, following the stories related by two former employees.

Henry Peavey, the houseman who discovered the body on Thursday morning, declared he had seen at least one pink silk nightgown there.

In connection with this, it also was learned yesterday how Edward F. Sands, former secretary, accused robber and forger and now being sought as a material witness in the murder case, spied on his employer while working for Mr. Taylor.

Sands related his observations to Earl Tiffany, former chauffeur for Mr. Taylor, so Mr. Tiffany says. He observed silken things of pink hue in the upstairs rooms of the expensively appointed apartment. His curiosity was

aroused.

So Sands folded the garments in a trick manner, according to the story related by Mr. Tiffany, who was employed at the same time as was Sands. The result of the servant's trap were that he became convinced the garments were not merely kept there for sentimental reasons. He paid particular attention to the visitors to the Taylor home, it was declared, and drew his own conclusions.

Peavey stated last night he remembered seeing at least one pink nightgown. If his memory serves him right, he added, it was there the day Mr. Taylor was killed. Police officers yesterday were evasive as to the whereabouts of the lingerie. They declined to say whether or not they are devoting part of their efforts to that phase of the mystery.

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February 6, 1922

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Film Star Denies She Holds Clew;
Ex-Husband Sought

Los Angeles, Feb. 5.--The moving picture actress who has been sought for three days in connection with the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor has been found by the police, it was learned today.

They refuse to give her name, but she was questioned at length this afternoon. She professed ignorance as to the crime or any motive for it.

The actress was divorced from her husband several months ago and her ex-husband, it is said, has made open threats that he would "get" all the friends of his wife whom he blamed for their trouble.

This actress and Mr. Taylor, it was said, were very close friends and were seen together frequently, but it was denied that there was any affair of the heart. The husband, according to the story told the police, was wildly jealous of his wife, and quarrels over her association with certain well known

actors and actresses are said to have precipitated a divorce action, the wife getting the divorce several months ago. At that time he is reported to have made threats, not only involving Mr. Taylor, but others in Hollywood.

Police today are searching for the husband, who is known to be in Los Angeles.

A prominent motion picture actor, who was placed under surveillance yesterday until his movements before and after the crime can be thoroughly checked, is said to be a friend of this fair divorcee.

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February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Photo of Winifred Kingston Honored by Slain Director

On the desk of William Desmond Taylor stood one framed photograph.

In his entire bungalow, filled with photos of celebrities and friends, mostly women, this picture alone was framed--and framed beautifully in naturally finish hardwood.

It was the likeness of Winifred Kingston, film star.

"Engaged ever?" Miss Kingston was asked yesterday in her beautiful West Hollywood home.

"Ridiculous!"

"Mr. Taylor and I were the best of friends--nothing more. I knew him perhaps as intimately as any woman friend could, but there had never been a whisper or thought of love between us. Certainly not.

"It so happened that both Mr. Taylor and I were English--that is, he was Irish, but a British subject and educated as an Englishman and with the British army traditions behind him and his family.

"We Britishers are naturally reserved and don't usually tell intimate things to others. But early in the history of the films, Mr. Taylor and I became acquainted, back in the 'Balboa' days. As I was English we became

somewhat more friendly than most and at various times he told me many things, perhaps, which everyone did not know.

"For example, he told me about having been married and having a child, and also about having been divorced. I never thought anything in particular about it and don't even remember the occasion of his telling me--whether I asked him or whether he volunteered the information.

"But any number of us in the film colony knew his and those who didn't know had to reason to--they weren't the sort of people or weren't close enough to Mr. Taylor to be told. I don't see why any one is surprised to learn about that.

"It's not unusual, either, that he should have had my photograph on his desk. He directed me in any number of pictures and for years we have been good friends. I gave him that picture for Christmas one year and he probably had it framed as a matter of course.

"As a matter of fact, one is more liable to frame a picture of an old, though platonic friend, than a picture of one in whom he is but momentarily interested.

"I never knew, of course, that he had changed his name on coming out here, but that fact doesn't seem to be important.

"As a matter of fact, I don't see where any of this old history is important in the solution of the mystery of his death. I think everything points to this man Sands."

Miss Kingston threw some very interesting light on Sands' career, details gleaned, she said, from various conversations with Taylor.

"While Edward Knoblock was living at Mr. Taylor's home," she said, "Sands went down to a well known department store in town and bought at various times a considerable amount of lingerie. I understood he gave this to a girl he was interested in--a very young creature who lived at home with her mother. All of this he charged to Mr. Taylor's account, a matter which greatly enraged the director when he returned from abroad.

"Sands had frequently done shopping for him, but Mr. Taylor told me humorously that he would hardly have sent a servant to pick out ladies'

underwear.

"During this same period, when Mr. Knoblock was a guest of Mr. Taylor's and was supposed to pay for nothing, Sands presented the English author with a bill amounting to some hundreds of dollars for groceries he had used while at the house. Mr. Knoblock, being a gentleman and not wanting a row, however little he understood the matter, paid the bill. When Mr. Taylor returned he was naturally dumbfounded.

"On another occasion Sands did another peculiar thing. Mr. Taylor had two thermos bottles around the house, neither of any particular value. There were many other things Sands easily could have stolen of more value, but he took one of these bottles to present to some girl. Her mother did not understand the act at all and didn't want the girl to take it.

"Most unusual of Sands' actions, however, was a document he once drew up.

"One day, to show his affection and regard for Mr. Taylor, he wrote, in his own handwriting, a sort of servile contract, in which he said that he would be Mr. Taylor's servant for life and would always be his slave.

"Mr. Taylor told me about the document and laughed. I don't know what every happened to the paper, but Sands apparently took it seriously.

"All of this led me to believe that the man was mentally deranged and he is the only man I can think of who might have killed Mr. Taylor."

Miss Kingston said that she could find no possible intimation or statement made by Taylor to her that might form the basis for a motive growing out of an old feud. Nothing of the kind was ever said to her, she stated.

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February 6, 1922
Lannie Haynes Martin
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor Often in Moods of Despondency

Baring in detail her entire acquaintance with William D. Taylor for the

past seven years Miss Neva Gerber, his former fiancée, yesterday afternoon graphically told of his fits of utter despondency that gripped the dead man at times and of his many mysterious disappearances, for two and three weeks at a time continuing over a period of several years, and admitted that she had received thousands of dollars in checks from the dead director.

"At times Mr. Taylor would sink to such depths of despair, said Miss Gerber, "that his whole body seemed racked as if in physical torture. He would walk the floor and wring his hands exclaiming, 'Why do I have to keep up this battle? Is it worth while to keep up this struggle of existence? With all of these odds against me is the struggle worth while?' and when I would ask him what he meant by these strange words he would say, 'Oh, my health is so bad--I have no stomach left--I can't eat anything,' but there were other times when he would say 'I have had bad news from home,' but he never told me just what the news was.

"There would be times just after he had finished directing a picture when he would say he was so nervous he would have to go away for awhile and that he was going out into the mountains where he could rest and would see no one. Sometimes he would be gone as long as three weeks and I would not hear from him, although he would telegraph from some nearby point just as he was leaving and just before his return. Once he told me that had been driving down from the Northern part of the State alone for three days and later when mentioning an incident of the trip he said 'the man who was with me in the car said this was a dangerous piece of road.' I said 'I thought you were alone,' and he very plausibly explained it was a man he had picked up and was giving a lift, and although I did not exactly have any suspicions about anything I often wondered about these trips.

"It is true that Mr. Taylor gave me three cars, first an old one that he had used and later two new ones which were purchased in my name. When he began giving me presents of jewelry, automobiles and--" Miss Gerber hesitated and blushed--"and money, we were engaged, we expected to be married as soon as I got my divorce and it did not seem anything out of the way to either of us. When we first began going together Mr. Taylor had less financial resources

than I had myself. When we would go out to dinner together when I was first working with the Balboa Film Company we would many times pool all of our spare change and decide where we could afford to eat.

"He always said that I had been a square pal with him and when he began making really big money he seemed to think it was just the natural thing to divide what he had with me. When our engagement was broken off about two years ago we did not have any quarrel; there were not harsh words or even bitter feeling. After he came back from the army he seemed more melancholy and despondent than he had been before. He would even be irritable at times, so my mother said that as I had had such an unfortunate experience in my marriage to one man who was much older than myself that it was not wise to make another venture of the same kind. Both she and I talked to him about this and we decided to end the engagement. After that time I never went out with him. I did not see him for months at a time, although he frequently phoned, and he came to the house a few times. He was always just as pleasant to both my mother and myself as he had ever been, and he continued to make me little presents of money, by check, sometimes \$75, sometimes \$100.

"A little over a year ago I started my own company and put quite a bit of my own money into the venture and it has not brought returns as rapidly as I had expected. Some time about the 9th of January, 1922, I was talking to Mr. Taylor on the telephone and told him that things were in pretty much of a jam, and that I was in temporary financial straits, and he said he would let me have some money, and about the 11th day of the same month he sent me a check for \$500.

"I have never kept any record of the amounts given me, but his generosity has continued over a number of years and I suppose his gifts would amount, all told, to several thousand dollars. Mr. Taylor used to depend on me to look after many things for him. It was I who found the house for him in which he was living at the time of his death, and when he and I were engaged and were going out together I would frequently stop there for a few minutes, but there was always a servant present.

"When Mr. Taylor frequently betrayed such an intimate knowledge of works

of art of every description I would say to him, 'How did you learn so much about period furniture and tapestries and everything like that?' he would reply, 'Oh, I used to chum around with a man in New York who was an art collector and an authority on the subject and he taught me all I know.' And he would often refer casually to his life in New York. Sometimes, but very infrequently, he would speak of his people in England. He said he had a sister and a mother there and that his child was with his mother in England. When he returned from the war he told me that his sister's husband had been killed in battle and that both his mother and child had been killed in a German air raid over London. He never spoke of having a brother or a sister-in-law.

"Although I know of his former wife--he had described her to me as a very beautiful blonde--I never suspected that he had lived under a different name or that there was anything in his past which he needed or wished to conceal. Once when I was crying over something he became infuriated and told me never to do so again in his presence as it crazed him and rendered him so irresponsible he felt like striking a woman who cried. He then told me that his former wife's crying had been the thing which had made it impossible for him to live with her, but that is the only thing he ever said about their differences.

"But he frequently referred in a vague way to great sorrows he had had and of not making the most he might out of his life. I would try to cheer him up by telling him of what a wonderful director he had become in such a short time and that he had great fame and success ahead of him, and sometimes he would throw off his despairing mood but it began to return more and more frequently. I do not think the general public knew anything about this despondent side of him as he was a very silent and self-contained man.

"Because of his unhappy moods and his loneliness I had frequently begged him not to live alone, but to take a room at a club or a hotel but he said he could only work when entirely isolated and that he loved solitude. I had not seen him for several weeks previous to the murder and I have not the slightest conception or theory as to what was the motive or who was the perpetrator of

so cruel a deed."

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February 6, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...While a number of officers were visiting many homes in the picture colony, endeavoring to gain some light on this new angle sheriff's officers, headed by Chief Criminal Deputy Al Manning and Deputy Harvey Bell, were catechizing three men at the county jail, one of them a man supposed to be a material witness and the others his close friends.

The man upon whom interest especially centered is a motion picture actor who had not been named in connection with any phase of the case. His detention followed an anonymous telephone call to the sheriff's office early this afternoon and he was taken into custody after nightfall.

Following a long grilling, Manning, accompanied by another officer, took him to the Taylor home and into the "murder room" to see what effect this dramatic introduction would have on him.

Later the officers had the actor walk up and down in front of the house, and Mrs. Douglas MacLean, who had seen the man supposed to be the actual murderer leave the place was stationed at the open door of her home looking out as she had been on the night of the crime.

When Mrs. MacLean failed to identify the actor as the man she had seen last Wednesday night following the fatal shot, the officers turned him loose, but enjoined him not to leave the city.

Mrs. MacLean upon being shown a photograph of Edward F. Sands exclaimed "He looks like the man I saw."

One of the men under suspicion is believed to be a dope peddler and a suggestion has come from a certain quarter which is in touch with the transactions in contraband drugs that the explanation of the murder, the motive and the identity of the criminal--will eventually come from this source.

Now, it is a known fact that Taylor himself was not addicted to any drug, but it is reported that he attended two or three "hop" parties in order to get "atmosphere" and local color for pictures.

A number of Taylor's close friends, however--and these numbered several women--were addicts. They were not patrons of professional peddlers, but nevertheless, they secured their supplies from some source.

"We are going to dig deep into this phase," said one of the detectives last night.

Peavey, the film director's valet, stated, however, that he had never seen any form of narcotics in Taylor's apartments. He could not imagine, he said, that Taylor's home might have been a distributing point.

Peavey contributed additional information regarding the night dress.

When he entered Taylor's employ some six months ago, he said, he straightway began to put his master's room in order. Among several articles lying around he noticed a small flat green box; he found that it contain a pink silk garment--a woman's. It had a lace edging.

He placed this in one of the bureau drawers, where it remained surviving even the two burglarious raids of Sands, his predecessor as Taylor's valet.

That is, it remained there until the night of the murder. It must have disappeared then, he says, because it was not found among Taylor's effects.

Did the person who removed the letters also take the nightrobe?

It is a strange circumstance which, the police say, adds strength to the theory that somewhere in the plot, possibly as an innocent cause, but nevertheless as cause, was a woman.

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February 6, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor Love Secret Told by Chauffeur

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--Once, in an expansive mood, William Desmond Taylor,

film director, whose murder last Wednesday was one of the most mysterious ever recorded in Los Angeles, talked intimately with his chauffeur, Lester Wing.

"I never really loved but one woman," Taylor declared to the Chinese, according to the latter's story, told yesterday.

"She was my stage partner. I was engaged to her. But she died before we could be married--and I'll never marry another woman."

Wing was in Taylor's employ for several years before the film director deserted the land of make-believe to take part in the real, hard game of war.

"Mr. Taylor was a fine man," Wing said. "He was very good to his servants. And brave. Why, on the way to Bakersfield one time, a car sped around a curve ahead of us, threatening to run us off the road, but Mr. Taylor never flinched.

"Also, he trusted people too much, at times, I think. Once he trusted anyone it was forever. Many times he sent me to deposit money in the bank--\$1,500, \$2,000, and sometimes as high as \$3,000 in money and checks.

"Once a lady from New York sent him a telegram asking to help her. She was in need. He sent me to the telegraph office with \$200 in cash to send to her.

"He taught me lots of things. Anything I ever wanted to know he would explain and make me understand."

The only woman with whom Taylor was friendly at the time of Wing's service was Neva Gerber, according to the Chinese. She was with Taylor several times a week.

Two or three times a week it was Taylor's habit to call for his car, a beautiful gray one, and take a long ride alone. Often, Wing said, he would leave the car with the chauffeur and talk long, solitary walks.

"He would walk alone, eat alone, cook alone--everything alone," the former chauffeur said.

"The only time he would want to see me would be to make appointments."

The high esteem in which Taylor was held by those with whom he transacted business was told by Mrs. Edna Goodwin of 1910 West Sixth street.

"We owned a garage near the Taylor home," Mrs. Goodwin said. "Mr. Taylor

often came to us for gasoline and other service. That was three years ago before he entered the army.

"He had a buff colored chummy roadster, and there was always a young lady with him--generally the same one. As soon as we saw the car coming we'd run out, exclaiming:

""There's Bill Taylor; there's Bill Taylor.'"

"We thought so much of him. And every one connected with the garage thought the same. He was a wonderful man. I can't understand why anyone would want to harm him.

"Taylor had a Chinese chauffeur at that time, Lester Wing. And after Taylor went away, Wing entered the service of another man. But he could not be consoled. He would often come in and say:

""I wish Mr. Taylor would come back, so I could be his chauffeur again. I'll never get another boss like him.'"

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February 6, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

The only person who saw the human enigma who had just murdered William Desmond Taylor, famed motion picture director and soldier of fortune, was Mrs. Douglas MacLean, winsome wife of the cinema star. In an interview today she gave the first detailed account of the sinister happenings of that night last Wednesday.

"I simply cannot describe him," she said. "I should say he was five feet and nine inches tall, perhaps. It seemed to me he had a prominent nose, but that impression may be by reason of the shadow from the arc lamp.

"I hardly think it was the man Sands, whom I knew. It seemed to me he was not so heavy as Sands.

"I can only be sure of the gray plaid cap, and that his neck was muffled with something--perhaps his coat collar. I can't even tell whether he wore an overcoat."

..."We had just finished dinner. Christina, the maid, was busy in the dining room. I had walked into the living room and was sitting here on the davenport knitting.

"Mr. MacLean had gone upstairs to get a little electric stove we sometimes used. It was a very chilly night, extremely cold, in fact, for Los Angeles.

"Then came the shattering report. It was muffled, but still it seemed to penetrate to every corner of the rooms. Christina paused in her work.

" 'Oh,' she said, 'wasn't that a shot?'

"I really didn't know. The court faces a hill, and automobiles climbing the grade often backfire. It was just such a noise.

" 'I'm sure it was a shot,' the maid said.

"I arose and walked to the door and opened it. There were several lights in the living room, back of me. They reflected from the screen door. I pressed forward against the screen, looking out into the dark.

"Then I saw the man.

"He was standing with his back almost entirely turned to me, looking toward Alvarado St. He stood on a corner of Mr. Taylor's porch. The door of the Taylor home was open and the room inside was lighted.

"Almost on the instant I saw him, the man turned and faced me.

"He did not seem surprised or startled; surely not alarmed. It was all done casually and I can't understand why I stood there and watched him.

"He smiled at me, I could see the corners of his mouth curl in the shadow of his cap. I could not see his face distinctly-not well enough, that is, to distinguish his features.

"I thought Mr. Taylor must have called to him from inside the house.

"For the man turned away, walked to the door and almost disappeared inside. It seemed he was bidding his host goodbye. It was all done in a moment.

"He closed the door. He didn't slam it, nor did he shut it with unusual softness. It was simply done in the way you, or I, or anyone, would close a door.

"Then he walked across the porch, down the steps and turned toward me.

"Satisfied in my mind, if there ever had been fear or even wonder there, I started to draw back into the house.

"While I slowly closed the door, I saw him turn into the walk between the houses and disappear. It was very dark there. That walk leads to another street, where persons on that side of the court usually park their cars.

"And so I thought nothing of it; absolutely nothing.

"I didn't even mention it to Mr. MacLean until the next morning, when the terrible screams of Mr. Taylor's servant awakened us. Then I remembered the man.

"And still I cannot conceive that a murderer could act so naturally. It simply is beyond belief."

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February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Actress Expresses Anxiety to Recover Jestling Letters

"I sought those letters and hoped to get them before they reached the scrutiny of others. I admit this but it was for only one purpose--to prevent their terms of affection from being misconstrued.

"You see, just in a jest, Mr. Taylor called me 'Blessed Baby'--it started at dinner parties we attended together. And just to tease him, I called him--this great, big, stern-minded man--'Baby' in return. They were used in our letters, strictly in fun, and I feared, well, misunderstanding."

And this is the reason Mabel Normand, famous film star, told The Examiner yesterday that she sought so earnestly the missives exchanged between her and the slain motion-picture director, William Desmond Taylor, after the inquest Saturday.

But the letters and telegrams she refers to are strangely missing. Following the second burglary of the Taylor bungalow, at 404 B South Alvarado

street some weeks ago, they were found undisturbed when Taylor showed Miss Normand about the ransacked rooms. They were then in the top drawer of the dresser.

"Our letters exchanged were mostly 'joshing' ones, frivolous and jesting about the trivialities we had come upon since our last meeting. Some were of more serious import, explained why dinner engagements we had arranged had to be canceled," Miss Normand said yesterday.

"Most of the Letters--there were eight or nine of them--were written when either he and I was in New York and sent from the Ritz-Carlton. One was when I was ill and told him the difficulty I had in purchasing certain types of golf balls he had requested me to purchase for him in the city.

"The telegrams, a half dozen of them, were of similar nature merely asking about the health of the other and telling him how I was enjoying the attractions in the metropolis.

"I seldom would sign my name, preferring to keep him guessing with a sketch of myself at the end of the letter. His calling me 'Blessed Baby'--started at a dinner party--and he said it, of course, with a laugh, but it seemed so inconsistent from that stern-typed man--and I joshed him about it. Later, in the same laughing spirit, I called him by the equally inconsistent term 'Baby' and we continued it. But since I have feared that it would be misconstrued--that it would not appear to be as intended."

Then the famous picture star reverted in conversation to the night of the tragedy, when the director was slain a short time after he had escorted Miss Normand to her waiting automobile.

"There is a doubt yet in my mind but that the murderer was not in the house secreted during the time of my short visit with Mr. Taylor," she said. "I can't understand how he could have been brazen enough to have entered during the brief interim when Mr. Taylor came with me to the curbing.

"A mysterious part of it all was a telephone call he was receiving shortly before I visited his apartment to inquire about a book he was to lend me. He was helping me with my literary studies, you know, and treated me always with the courtesy of an adviser.

"My bell was answered by his colored servant, Henry Peavey, who told me Mr. Taylor was telephoning. Not wishing to eavesdrop on a private conversation I told Peavey I would wait outside. When Mr. Taylor heard my voice he hurriedly cut off his phone call and rushed to meet me with:

"'Oh, I know why you have come. It is for the book I was to lend you.' We talked for about three quarters of an hour--it was just 7:45 that evening when I left him--and then he told me that he had some checks to mail out. He said he would phone to me about 9 and see how I enjoyed the start of the book.

"Shortly before this, Peavey who had been finishing his work in the kitchen, nodded a 'good night,' stopped for a short conversation with my chauffeur and went on his way. After Mr. Taylor had helped me with my wraps he took me to my car, where we talked for a moment about a magazine I had purchased. I then drove away,

"My opinion is that Mr. Taylor was murdered for a motive of revenge, but just why someone would seek vengeance is beyond my comprehension. Never in his conversation with me had he spoken of any enmity between him and others. And I never should have suspected it, as he was the type that seemed to make of everyone a devoted friend.

"In my opinion Mr. Taylor was of irreproachable morals, a typical gentleman, who seemed incapable of stooping to things of the questionable or dishonorable sort. To me he was always a kindly adviser in my efforts at mental improvement and to all who knew him he was an inspiration to the nobler and loftier things of life.

"If there is a possibility that the jealousy of another woman enters into the mystery," Miss Normand continued, "I feel certain that the phone call which he was receiving as I entered his apartment had something to do with it.

"Whoever it was calling him seemed intensely absorbed in what he had to say. And the hasty cutting off of the conversation might have aroused antagonism in any one interested in Mr. Taylor in a sentimental way. Perhaps the announcement of his servant, Peavey, that I had come was overheard by the

person at the other end of the wire. And perhaps--who can tell--that it was this person who imagined jealousy and outraged feelings and came immediately to the apartment and committed the venomous deed.

"I did not ask him who it was that called, for I felt it was none of my business. Then again, he was not the type of man who lets others in on what he considered his private affairs. He was very secretive--almost seemed to place a barrier of mystery between him and his most intimate friends--and it was this mystic quality that gave him such marked fascination.

"Of this much I am thoroughly convinced: It was a man, not a woman, who fired the shot that killed Taylor. I know the feminine sex and feel certain that a woman would have had to take more than one shot to have had as deadly an effect as the one that brought about his demise. Perhaps in three or four efforts she might have done it--but not in one.

"The man who committed this deed was a sure shot and understood the gun game. He understood where to aim, and when--an experienced gunman.

"As for the disappearance of my letters I cannot account. I know of absolutely no one who would be interested in them. They have no significance of anything except the harmless friendship that existed between us. When I saw Mr. Taylor was keeping them I asked him why. And I remember yet his kindly countenance when he smiled and said: "Oh--just because."

"He often remonstrated with me because I did not write more frequently. But what I usually had to say was done over the phone or in his presence.

"I want everyone to know, however, that I am doing all I possibly can to aid in the solution of this tragic mystery," she concluded.

"For Mr. Taylor was to me the very personification of kindness and righteousness--the sort of man that made it an honor to be called his friend."

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
NEW YORK HERALD

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--...A report of a threat made on the night of the murder also was being run down. This report, made by a business man to the police, was expected to set the officers on the trail of a man who is quoted as saying on the night Taylor was slain within a few minutes after Mabel Normand left the Taylor home: "There will be a movie director show up missing in the morning."...

Capt. Adams said it was not impossible that Taylor was killed by a burglar, who seized upon the opportunity provided when Taylor escorted Miss Normand to her automobile to sneak in the house. The position of the bullet and the line of fire indicated shows, Capt. Adams said, that the assassin probably was crouching behind the door when Taylor entered...

The fact that his houseman, Henry Peavey, and his former secretary, Edward F. Sands, are both said to be "queer persons," has led to much speculation whether Taylor was abnormal himself. It is thought by a majority who are investigating the case that this is a phase which will develop and throw much new light on the case. Other associates of the man are known to the police to be persons of vicious habits...

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February 6, 1922
Edward Doherty
ARKANSAS GAZETTE

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--...Henry Peavey, by the way, put all his sewing into a satchel this afternoon, his beautiful pillow tops, his exquisite doilies, his crochet work and his tatting and prepared to depart from the city. He called on Captain Adams to let him know of his intentions.

"Not so quick," said Adams. "You will stay in Los Angeles until released."

"I can't stay, captain," said the negro. "I'se very lonesome without Mr. Taylor. I'll sure miss him, captain. Got no one now to squz oranges and lemins for. [sic] Got no nice room to do my sewing in. Please let me go."

The captain explained that he wanted Peavey to remain as a material witness and declared that if he tried to go away he might find himself in another nice sewing room, with free board.

Peavey declares he has told all the knows of his master, the man who lived as William Desmond Taylor, when his name was really William Deane Tanner, and of the women who came to house, but some of the detectives working on the case believe his memory could be refreshed.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
NEW YORK TRIBUNE

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--...It became known today that Chief of Police Everington has taken extraordinary precautions to prevent undue or unwarranted publicity attending the investigation of the Taylor mystery. The decision is prompted by his desire to prevent the blasting of the reputations of innocent screen players whose careers depend upon their ability to live the lives they depict upon the screen. Pointing to the damage caused to innocent men and women whose names were casually mentioned in connection with another scandal of the film world, he declared that no effort would be made to protect the guilty but that everything would be done to prevent the innocent being involved in publicity...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
NEW YORK TIMES

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--A motion picture actor and a camera man were brought to the Los Angeles County Jail here tonight for questioning as to their possible knowledge of clues to the murder of William Desmond Taylor, film director. After a two-hour examination they were released. Their names were not made public.

The make-up was still on the actor's face when he arrived at the jail indicating, officers stated, that the Deputy Sheriffs who had brought him in, Al Manning, chief criminal deputy, and Harvey Bell, were in great haste to learn his story.

The men were located at a motion-picture studio in the Hollywood district of Los Angeles, it was stated. After they had been questioned separately for two hours, the officers started back to Hollywood, with the actor to give him an opportunity to make good his declaration to the deputies that he could account for his movements last Wednesday night, the night Taylor was slain. Apparently he did so for the release followed.

Another angle was the story told by an associate of the dead director that a former employee had been heard to exclaim, when he heard of the slaying:

"Bill Taylor got only what he deserved."

the investigation showed, the police said, that this man had been employed by the Famous Players-Lasky concern, working under Taylor, in a minor capacity.

One day he was drunk when he went on duty. Taylor ordered him removed from the place. The next day the man returned, only to find an order from Taylor that he should not be admitted. The police say they had begun a search for him.

Searching for a drug peddler, upon whose trail the police said they were "getting warmer," and the absence of a woman's silken night dress, said by Henry Peavey, colored houseman, to be missing from the apartments of Taylor, the other developments here tonight of the search for his slayer.

The police were reticent as to the details concerning their search for the man, a peddler who was believed to have sought patrons for his contraband drugs among the employees of motion picture studios, but they intimated they believe he had attempted to make a delivery through Taylor to an actress who found it difficult to make her purchases in person.

This was the first active participation of the Sheriff's forces in the case.

The exact importance of the missing night dress, which was pink, was not made plain. Peavey, however, was firm in his declaration that it had a regular place in Taylor's apartments, and equally firm in his assertions that since his employer was slain he had been unable to find it...

The "main issue" so far, one investigator said, was the whereabouts of the missing valet Sands for a few days before the shooting. The search for Sands continued today. Checking of the various angles of the case among members of the motion picture colony and other friends and acquaintances of Taylor almost invariably led to some mention of Sands' name, according to detectives.

Police said they had had several clues to Sands' whereabouts, but that these had resulted in disappointments...

Tending to show the alleged feeling of Taylor toward Edward F. Sands, or Edward Fitz Strathmore, his former butler, whom the director had charged with a felony, was a further statement today by Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored houseman.

"Not long ago," says Peavey, "I was showing Mr. Taylor a coat I had bought. 'That looks like one Sands stole from me,' he said. 'Oh, if I could only get my hands on that fellow.'"...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

Los Angeles, Feb. 5--Another angle of the investigation into the murder of William Taylor, movie director, was eliminated tonight after deputy sheriffs had questioned three suspects for hours and then released them.

One of the trio had been an extra man. He had worked under Taylor's direction. He has been accused of being one of the leaders of the ring of bootleggers and dope peddlers that has been enriched by the movie colony. He

wore a muffler and a cap such as distinguished the man seen leaving the Taylor flat after the shot was fired.

His automobile had been seen in the vicinity of the apartment court in Alvarado Street, the night of the murder.

This man and two others were taken to the homes of various witnesses. None of them could make any identification. Each of the three had a puncture proof alibi.

The sheriff's men and the police had worked for three days on this angle. They feel satisfied with time spent, merely because it eliminates one of the many clues that have not helped, but hindered a solution.

In an effort to begin at the beginning to make a new start, to hunt for new clues and for several other reasons not told, Captain of Detectives Adams, squads of police and detectives, and Charles Eyton, manager of the Lasky Studios, met at the Alvarado Street house late tonight and conferred.

All the particulars of the conference were kept secret. But it is believed the detectives made a closer survey of the rooms than they have done heretofore, and the fingerprints found in the flat were examined and compared.

Possibly the disappearance of Mabel Normand's letters was also discussed. The letters had been in a bureau drawer in the bedroom upstairs. Miss Normand went to the house to get them yesterday. The drawer was empty.

A dainty pink silk nightie which adorned one of the drawers of the same bureau was missing too. Nobody could tell who had it. It was hinted, however, that a policeman is keeping it, saying it will bring him good luck.

Henry Peavey, who was Taylor's valet and cook, was questioned again by detectives and contradicted some of the statements made by Miss Normand.

Miss Normand has asserted that she never went to Taylor's house alone before that Wednesday night. Peavey says she was present on the evening before the murder and helped to eat up a lot of rice pudding the colored boy had made.

"He asked her to have some more Wednesday night, Mr. Taylor did, and she said 'No, I had all I wanted last night,'" Peavey declared.

"Mr. Taylor," he went on, "he seemed to feel a whole lot of love for

Mabel--more than Mabel cared for him. When he was out of town he sent her night letters every night. When he was here he wrote her three or four times a week. He was always sending her bouquets of flowers. Man, do you know I bought one of them bouquets for him, and it cost \$35? Miss Normand she told me once she was going to marry Mr. Taylor, and she said something about maybe they'd have a little baby some day."

"What did you mix for Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand that last night, Henry?" asked one of the detectives.

"It was a simple drink," the boy replied. "I squeeze orange juice and then I squeeze a leming. Then I put in a little portion of gin and then a little squirt of Italian vermouth. Very fine drink. They enjoyed it very much.

The police are no nearer now to the solution of the crime than they were on Thursday morning, when the body was discovered.

But they rest their hopes of solution upon a series of tiny ridges and whorls and loops in the faint lines made on the smooth surfaces of doors and tables and chair arms in the cozy bachelor flat where Taylor lived.

Their chances of success rest upon fingerprints and on the information to be obtained from a band of dope peddlers they are watching and on the arrest of Taylor's former valet, Edward F. Sands, or Strathmore...

The detectives are still looking for Edward F. Sands, the former valet and friend of the slain director, for a man known as a broker, for another director, for a number of "hop" peddlers.

Twenty men and women are under suspicion. Twenty theories are being entertained. But not one arrest has been made, not a single clew has been unearthed and the search becomes all but hopeless.

The murder mystery has brought the city virtually to a crisis.

There are hundreds of substantial citizens who seen in the case the iron hand of the moving picture giant holding down the curtain that the police and the newspapers would lift.

They believe the movie interests would spend millions of dollars not to catch the murderers; but to prevent the real truth from coming out, to avert

the exposure of Hollywood, to squelch before it is born the scandal of the century.

Taylor, who seems to have deserted his wife and baby some fourteen years ago, who lived under an alias, who surrounded himself with people of doubtful character--men who sew and crochet and embroider, women of queer reputation--and who lived the typical life of the movie director, as pictured in all the gossip of the studios, was the saint of Hollywood, according to his friends.

Not a man or woman who knew him but says he was a charming gentleman, a soul above reproach.

It is quite true the movie world would prefer the thing handled in silence, even ignored.

They regret the death of Taylor sincerely, but they feel the least said about it the better.

They feel that with the revelations coming out of the mystery, the doings of other film actors and actresses may become known, and these are things that would wipe out many a fair reputation once they get into circulation.

They fear the world may come to know about all the little parties that help to relieve the tedium of studio life, the unconventional companionships that exist between extra girls and assistant movie directors in many instances; between male and female stars in other instances.

They fear that the movie patrons may learn how "Tillie Hopscotch," who played the sweet country girl in the latest Blah release, entertains her friends by dressing them all in silken kimonos, irrespective of their gender and squats them down in a circle to drink orange juice and gin or beer and ether or some other queer mixture with a kick.

Orange juice and gin is the favorite tipple of many a dear, lovely child of the screen, and ether and beer is considered more or less the potion of a healthy he-man.

They fear that there might be some misunderstanding if the fans learned about those very free moonlight parties, sometimes held in the Beverly Hills district, where nymphs and naiads dance in costumes made purely of melting moonbeams.

The thing is rushing to a head. It means disaster to many in the cinema colony. It means the loss of dollars to the companies. It means a revolution in the pictures.

Hollywood is content with itself and its morals and its views of life. It wants no change. It wants no chastisement. It wants to go on as it has been going.

The movie bosses are in power in Los Angeles.

They have been able so far to keep down the blinds. Did an exposure threaten they vowed to leave Los Angeles bag and baggage, and Los Angeles can ill afford to lose the millions spent and invested by the movies.

If the movies leave Los Angeles, Los Angeles will suffer.

But even now the police are seeking to round up five peddlers of drugs, peddlers who have been in many a movie star's bungalow, peddlers who know sinister things about the cinema world, peddlers who may know something of the murder...

And so the police are getting scant information from the movie colony about the real character of the dead man, about his friends and his enemies, about any possible motives for the murder.

The police are working hard, but they are under a terrible handicap, and they must deal gently with the stars. Some of the police are friends of the big actors and actresses, have taken money from them as wages for appearing in certain pictures. And they are not going to question them as tenaciously as they would, say, a girl of no position who had been caught shoplifting...

The bullet that ended Taylor's life has been examined. It is an old type bullet, and could have been used only in an old model revolver. The police are now searching every arms shop in the city to discover the purchaser of such a weapon...

Taylor went to places where ether is drunk in beer and hypodermic needles are used and marihuana and opium and morphine and haysheesh are wheeled in on tea carts to the guests--to get local color, and it is possible that out of one of these places came the man who fired the fatal shot...

Who's Who in the Taylor Case

Adams, David -- L.A.P.D. Captain, Chief of Detectives at the time of the Taylor murder.

Adams, Harvey -- Detained in Concord, North Carolina, suspected of being Sands, cleared.

Aldworth, A. R. -- Questioned by Woolwine during the Taylor murder investigation.

Anderson, Mr. -- Reportedly a friend of Peavey's who was sought by the police in connection with the Taylor case.

Arnheim, Harry -- Named by May Rupp as a conspirator in the Taylor murder.

Arto, George (a.k.a. Britt, Henry and Brett, Frank) -- Witness who saw Peavey talking to someone on the night of the murder.

Barrett, J. G. (a.k.a. Black Bart) -- discredited confessor to the Taylor murder.

Bean, James -- L.A.P.D. Captain who thought Taylor was killed by a "bungalow burglar."

Bell, Harvey -- Deputy L. A. County Sheriff who investigated the Taylor case and reportedly thought Shelby was guilty.

Belmont, Dr. R. B. J. -- Discredited confessor to the Taylor murder.

Beran, S. J. -- Related incident of a carpenter threatening to kill a movie director.

Berger, J. Marjorie -- Income tax accountant for Taylor and Shelby; met with Taylor on the day he was killed.

Biscailuz, Eugene -- L. A. County Undersheriff investigating the Taylor case; reportedly stated that Taylor was killed due to jealousy, not revenge.

Bliss, William -- Claimed to have seen Sands in Minneapolis.

Borden, Fay -- Friend of Mabel Normand, made statement that Taylor was in

love with Mabel.

Boruff, Earl -- Murdered detective who reportedly knew more about the Taylor case than anyone in California.

Bowman, William -- Reportedly lived with Taylor in Santa Monica 1913-1914.

Brettner, George -- Friend of Sands.

Brew, Julia (a.k.a. Benson, Julia) -- Worked for Mabel, questioned by Woolwine.

Brown, Frank -- Night watchman who reportedly gave Shelby a revolver.

Brown, Mrs. Theodore -- Made statement that Neva Gerber lived with her and Taylor would come to visit.

Brunen, John -- Theatrical manager whose murder was rumored linked to the Taylor case; rumor discredited.

Bryson, Frank -- Public Administrator, executor of Taylor estate.

Buckner, S. G. -- Neighbor of Taylor who reportedly telephoned the police after hearing Peavey yelling that Taylor was dead.

Bundesen, H. N. -- Stated Harry Lee told him that he had killed Taylor for \$1000 for interfering with a drug gang.

Cahill, William -- L.A.P.D. policeman investigating the Taylor case; reportedly thought Taylor was killed by a jealous woman; originator of the "kiss of death" theory.

Calvert, George -- Named by May Rupp as a conspirator in the Taylor murder.

Carillo, Gus -- Confessor to Taylor murder, discredited.

Carlson, Milton -- Handwriting expert consulted for the Taylor case, concluded that Sands and "Strathmore" were the same person.

Carsen, Charles -- Stated Sands hired two men to kill Taylor, discredited.

Cato, E. Ray -- L.A.P.D. policeman investigating the Taylor case.

Clark, Vincent -- Stated he made confidential statements to Woolwine incriminating Mabel Normand in the Taylor case.

Clifford, Kathleen -- Actress who reportedly visited Taylor's body in the mortuary and wept.

Cline, Herman -- L.A.P.D. detective investigating the Taylor case.

Cock, Andrew -- Gave ride to armed hitchhiker shortly before the Taylor

murder.

Coe, Henry -- Stated Taylor was killed by drug addicts.

Collins, "Dapper Don" -- Prohibition gangster, reportedly wanted for questioning in the Taylor case.

Connette, Honore -- Newspaperman suspected of being involved in the Taylor murder.

Cooley, Mrs. Charles -- Neighbor of Taylor's.

Cooper, Maudie -- Reportedly involved with drug gang who killed Taylor, cleared.

Dailey, L. D. "Red" -- Suspected in the Taylor case, cleared.

Davis, Harold -- Assistant District Attorney under Asa Keyes.

Davis, William -- Mabel Normand's chauffeur; drove her away from Taylor's home on the night Taylor was killed.

Deane-Tanner, Denis -- Taylor's brother.

Dewar, Frank -- L. A. County Deputy Sheriff investigating the Taylor case.

Dixon, Thomas -- Suitor of Mary Miles Minter, reportedly suspected of killing Taylor.

Doran, Frank -- Boasted of killing Taylor; arrested, questioned, cleared.

Doran, William -- Deputy District Attorney under Thomas Woolwine, took statement from Minter.

Dumas, Verne -- Neighbor of Taylor, reportedly the third man to enter the Taylor home on the morning the body was found.

East, William -- Named by May Rupp as a conspirator in the Taylor murder.

Eaton, Chauncey -- Chauffeur to Charlotte Shelby at the time of her visit to Taylor's home; Shelby gave him bullets from a gun; he hid them on a rafter in the basement of Casa Margarita.

Everington, James -- Los Angeles Chief of Police at the time of the Taylor murder.

Eyton, Charles -- Studio manager of Famous Players-Lasky where Taylor worked; came to Taylor's home after the body was discovered, testified at the coroner's inquest.

Fellows, Harry -- Taylor's assistant director at the time of the murder,

formerly Taylor's chauffeur.

Fellows, Howard -- Taylor's chauffeur at the time of the murder.

Fields, Albert -- Made statement that Peavey admitted killing Taylor.

Fields, Harry -- Arrested in Detroit, made statements admitting complicity in the Taylor case, discredited.

Filbin, Thomas -- Made statement that Peavey told him Mabel killed Taylor.

Fitts, Buron -- L. A. County District Attorney at the time of the 1937 investigation, reportedly thought Shelby was guilty.

Freeman, Harold -- Taylor's milkman, gave police information on Sands.

Gaisford, L. W. -- Told of meeting a strange man on the night of the murder.

Garrow, Ida -- Told of seeing a strange man in the vicinity of the murder scene.

Gerber, Neva -- Actress, engaged to Taylor for several years, but only friends at the time of the murder.

Gillon, Hazel -- According to Adela Rogers St. Johns, Hazel Gillon saw a person leave Taylor's home after the shot was fired.

Gorman, Harry -- Confessed to Taylor murder, discredited.

Graham, Lawrence -- Says Peavey told him Taylor was shot by a woman in the presence of Sands.

Green, Tom -- Federal agent in charge of drug investigations, discussed the drug situation in Hollywood with Taylor two years before the murder.

Harrington, Neal -- Neighbor of Taylor, reportedly first to enter Taylor house after Peavey yelled for help.

Harris, Albert -- Taxi driver who said he drove actor and crying actress before the murder.

Harris, Harry -- Jeweler in Santa Barbara who denied giving a gun to Shelby, as she claimed.

Hartley, Floyd -- Worked in gas station near Taylor's home, said a man asked where Taylor lived on the night of the murder.

Heffner, Otis (a.k.a. Hefner) -- Convict who claimed to know about the Taylor murder, discredited.

Henry, Leslie -- Investment broker for Charlotte Shelby, stole from her

account.

Herkey, John -- Named by May Rupp as conspirator in Taylor murder.

Herron, Robert -- Worked for Woolwine, took statement from Vincent Clark.

Holderman, E. F. -- Confessed to Taylor murder, discredited.

Hooper, Frank -- Convict, says he knows who killed Taylor, discredited.

Hopkins, George -- Taylor's art director.

Hoyt, Arthur -- Actor, friend of Taylor, attended play with Taylor on the Friday before the murder, told of Minter's prior visit to Taylor's home.

Hughes, Gareth -- Actor, implicated in Taylor murder by letter supposedly written by Connette.

Ivers, Julia Crawford -- Taylor's screenwriter, visited murder scene on the morning the body was found.

Jessurun, E. C. -- Manager of Alvarado Court duplexes where Taylor lives, heard shot, reportedly first to enter Taylor's apartment after Peavey found body,

Jewett, Christine -- Maid of Douglas and Faith MacLean, heard man pacing in alley prior to the murder, heard shot.

Jones, Tommy -- Suspected of being Sands, discredited.

Kearin, H. -- Questioned by Woolwine regarding the Taylor case.

Kee, Lim -- Killed in Chinatown, rumored link to Taylor murder.

Keyes, Asa -- Los Angeles District Attorney after Woolwine, eventually imprisoned for accepting a bribe on an unrelated case.

King, Ed -- Detective investigating the murder for the district attorney's office.

Kirby, Walter -- Named by May Rupp as conspirator in Taylor murder, questioned in Mexico when identified by Andrew Cock, released.

Kirkwood, James -- Actor/director, had relationship with Mary Miles Minter.

Knoblock, Edward -- Writer, lived in Taylor's home while Taylor was in Europe.

Kosloff, Theodore -- Actor/dancer, says strange man had confronted Taylor.

Kramer, Jack -- Identified as Taylor's killer by John Marazino, discredited.

Lawrence, Mr. -- Neighbor of Taylor, heard Taylor and Mabel walk to her car

prior to the murder.

Lee, Henry (a.k.a. Young, Harry) -- Arrested on drug charges and questioned about the Taylor murder.

Lee, Wong -- Drug peddler reported missing since the Taylor murder.

Lewis, Jane -- Reportedly questioned by Woolwine regarding the Taylor case.

Lewis, S. O. -- Reportedly questioned by Woolwine regarding the Taylor case.

Long, Thomas -- L.A.P.D. patrolman, saw man loitering near Taylor home smoking gold-tipped cigarettes.

Lynch, Ray -- Named by May Rupp as conspirator in Taylor murder.

Machaty, Gustav -- Stated strange man asked where Taylor lived.

MacLean, Douglas -- Actor, Taylor's neighbor, heard shot.

MacLean, Faith -- Taylor's neighbor, heard shot, saw man walk away from Taylor's home.

Maigne, Charles -- Fellow director and friend of Taylor, reportedly stated Taylor was certain an enemy might return and kill him.

Marazino, John -- Stated Jack Kramer killed Taylor, discredited.

Manning, Al -- Chief Criminal Deputy Sheriff who investigated the Taylor case.

McArthur, Arch -- Sennett press agent, shielded Mabel after the murder.

McBurney, Mrs. William -- Saw suspicious man on night of murder near murder scene.

McReynolds, Frank -- Stated a woman told him Taylor had a fight with a drug peddler.

Meister, C. M. -- Taxi driver, stated he had suspicious fares at time of murder.

Miles, Julia -- Grandmother of Mary Miles Minter, accompanied Minter to murder scene after body was found.

Milo, George -- Questioned by police regarding Taylor murder, released.

Minter, Mary Miles -- Actress in love with Taylor, became very emotional after being notified of his death.

Moreno, Antonio -- Actor, friend of Taylor, spoke with Taylor by phone on the night of the murder.

Mott, John -- Attorney of Mary Miles Minter and Charlotte Shelby.

Murphy, Clyde -- Attorney of Shelby in 1937, requested grand jury investigation into the Taylor murder.

Murphy, Wiley -- L.A.P.D. detective investigating the Taylor case.

Marshall, Neilan -- Director and friend of Taylor, rumored to be a suspect in the Taylor murder because of his relationship with Minter.

Nance, Frank -- Coroner who examined Taylor's body.

Normand, Mabel -- Comedy actress and girlfriend of Taylor, visited him and departed just prior to his murder.

O'Connor, Frank -- Director and friend of Taylor, formerly Taylor's assistant director, borrowed money from Taylor.

O'Neill, "Frisco Jimmie" -- Arrested in New York on drug charges, stated he knew Taylor very well.

O'Shea, Daniel (a.k.a. McShea, Stacy) -- Reported missing since murder, finally appeared, questioned, cleared.

Oyler, Ralph -- Federal investigator who implied Dapper Don Collins was responsible for the Taylor murder.

Parker, C. C. -- Owner of bookstore visited by Taylor on the afternoon before his murder.

Parsons, F. -- L.A.P.D. policeman on the scene shortly after the body was found.

Passe, J. E. -- British secret service agent reportedly working on the Taylor case.

Peavey, Henry -- Taylor's valet and cook at the time of the murder, discovered Taylor's body on the morning of February 2, 1922, thought Mabel Normand killed Taylor.

Peete, Lofie Louise -- Stated killers of J. C. Denton also killed Taylor.

Pinkerton, Mrs. Robert -- Stated Taylor killed because of Irish feud.

Pratt, Myrtle -- Neighbor of Taylor.

Proctor, Miles -- Stated Taylor killed by Peavey.

Purviance, Edna -- Actress in Chaplin films, neighbor of Taylor, called Mabel Normand and told her Taylor was dead.

Reddick, Mrs. C. F. -- Neighbor of Taylor.

Reineque, Henri -- Questioned by police regarding Taylor murder.

Remar, George -- Claimed to have seen Sands in Long Beach in 1936.

Richardson, Friend -- Governor of California who made cover-up accusations regarding the Taylor case.

Rinaldo, Russo -- Confessed to killing Taylor, discredited.

Robertson, Capt. W. A. -- Friend of Taylor, questioned by investigators.

Robins, Edward -- Married Taylor's ex-wife, knew Taylor in New York.

Robins, Ethel May Hamilton -- Taylor's ex-wife.

Romier, "Frenchy" Georges -- Questioned by police regarding Taylor case, reportedly he was with Mabel on the afternoon Taylor was killed.

Ross, Gene -- Stated she saw Taylor with Claire Windsor on the Saturday before he was killed, and that Taylor was very nervous.

Rupp, May -- Made statement linking Taylor murder with bootleg ring.

Roloff, S. F. -- Suspected of being Sands, cleared.

Salisbury, Edward -- Explorer and film maker, stated he thought Taylor was killed by drug ring for interfering with their sales.

Sanborn, Harry -- Suspected of being Sands, cleared.

Sands, Edward -- Taylor's former valet and cook, accused of embezzling money from Taylor, real name Edward F. Snyder.

Sans, Albert -- Confessed to Taylor murder, discredited.

Schrenkeisen, Frank -- Lawyer hired by Ethel Daisy Tanner to handle Taylor estate.

Scott, Homer -- Taylor's former cameraman, was cameraman for Mabel Normand at the time of the Taylor murder.

Sennett, Mack -- Producer of Mabel Normand's films and her former lover.

Shelby, Charlotte (a.k.a. Pearl Miles Reilly) -- Mother of actress Mary Miles Minter.

Shelby, Margaret (a.k.a. Alma M. Reilly or Margaret Fillmore) -- Sister of Mary Miles Minter, in 1937 accused her mother, Charlotte Shelby, of killing Taylor.

Smith, Jim -- Worked for D.A. Woolwine, reportedly was staying in Casa

Margarita on the night Taylor was killed.

Snively, C. E. -- Former L.A. Chief of Police, wrote letter accusing film industry of cover-up.

Stewart, James -- Reportedly a bootlegger who was delivering liquor to Taylor, heard a shot and saw a woman leave, discredited.

Stockdale, Carl -- Actor and friend of Charlotte Shelby, stated he was with Shelby on the night of the murder.

Stone, Mrs. M. S. -- Saw mysterious man on the murder night.

Tanner, Ada -- Taylor's sister-in-law.

Tanner, Ethel Daisy -- Taylor's daughter.

Taylor, Ruth Wing -- Wife of Ted Taylor, reportedly stated Taylor killed by man hired by Sennett, retracted.

Taylor, Ted -- William Desmond Taylor's publicity agent at the time of the murder.

Taylor, William Desmond -- Real name William Cunningham Deane Tanner, Hollywood film director murdered on February 1, 1922.

Taylor, William Edward -- Claimed to be Taylor's son.

Thiele, Walter -- Reportedly committed burglary on night of murder, suspected of Taylor murder, cleared.

Thomas, James -- Stated drug gang killed Taylor.

Tiffany, Earl -- Former chauffeur of Taylor, fired by Taylor, questioned by investigators.

Tiffany, Mrs. Earl -- Wife of former chauffeur, stated she saw Sands downtown L. A. on the day before the murder.

Traeger, William -- L. A. County Sheriff at the time of the murder, charged police with dragging feet.

Underwood, Walter -- Made statements suggesting his involvement in the Taylor case, discredited.

Van Trees, James -- Taylor's cameraman, son of Julia Crawford Ivers.

Wachter, Arthur -- Neighbor of Taylor, saw Mabel and Taylor together on the night before the murder.

Wah, Tom -- Arrested on narcotics charge, rumored link to Taylor case.

Waldron, J. A. -- Sennett studio manager, shielded Mabel Normand after the murder.

Wallis, Hubert. -- L.A.P.D. detective investigating the Taylor case.

Waterman, Louis -- Deputy Public Administrator, worked on Taylor's estate.

Waybright, Mrs. -- Gave Taylor dancing lesson on day he was killed.

Whitney, Charlotte -- Secretary of Charlotte Shelby, questioned by Sheriff's deputy, made statements to Keyes and Fitts.

Williams, Harry -- Former song writer sought in connection with drugs and the Taylor murder.

Willis, Richard -- Taylor's former agent and publicity director.

Windsor, Claire -- Actress, dated Taylor a week before the murder.

Wing, Lester -- Former chauffeur of Taylor.

Winn, Jesse -- L.A.P.D. detective investigating the Taylor murder.

Woolwine, Thomas Lee -- Los Angeles District Attorney at the time of the Taylor murder.

Wylie, Lila -- Reportedly sought for questioning, left Los Angeles the day Taylor was killed.

Zeigler, Thomas -- L.A.P.D. policeman, one of the first on the scene after Taylor's body was found, testified at the coroner's inquest.

Clara Beranger Comments on "The World's Applause"

"The World's Applause" was probably the first film inspired by the Taylor case. The following interview with scenario writer Clara Beranger was made before the film was produced. At that time, the film had the working title of "Notoriety."

* * * * *

May 7, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

If all writers were able to sell their ideas with as little ceremony as Clara Beranger did when William De Mille handed her a pencil and paper to write the plot of "Notoriety," lest one solitary scene should escape her memory, the old sob tales of crackers in a garret would be out of date. Miss Beranger, who is now working as busily as our old friend the bee to get ready to take a script of "Clarence" to the Coast next week, told us something of how she happened to write her original.

"I had been reading numerous scandals in the papers, and I marveled at the amount of space given these unsavory tales, and the thought came to me, these women mixed up in these scandals can never wash their skirts clean, even though they are innocent of wrong doing. Why not write a scenario showing how impossible it is for a girl to get back her standing once her precious name is headlined throughout the country. I told Mr. De Mille such a picture would have interest. He told me to stop everything and write a synopsis to file with Frank Woods, the scenario editor. I filed my synopsis and a few weeks later completed the scenario."

"'Notoriety,'" Miss Beranger explained, "had the alternate title of 'Limelight,' but when Mr. De Mille started casting and making arrangements for its production he chose my first title. Bebe Daniels will play the role of the girl who is innocently dragged into a sensational murder case, and afterward asked by the father of the boy she loves, to give him up because she is unfit to marry him.

"'I will not give him up,' the girl cries. 'I have done no wrong and I shall clear my name and marry him'

"Then," said Miss Beranger, "I show how impossible it is for her to convince the world she is the same girl she was before her name has bandied about as common property."

"Aren't you eager to start work on this pet child of yours?" Miss Beranger was asked.

"Naturally," she said, "but 'Clarence' will be produced before 'Notoriety' goes into work. I will be out in California when Mr. De Mille begins operations. Under my old contract I furnished eight continuities a year; now that I work only for William De Mille I only write four. That gives me an opportunity to see my work through from the story to the screen. It makes it possible for me to go over my script scene by scene with the producer, so he can make the picture with almost no changes. In the old days I had to keep my nose to the grindstone continually so as to finish the eight pictures in time for the different directors for whom I was writing."...

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/> or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 63 -- March 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Louella Parsons Interviews with Actresses

TAYLOROLOGY 53 contained a selection of Louella Parsons' interviews with silent film actors. Now it's the ladies' turn. The following interviews with actresses were conducted by Louella Parsons between 1918 and 1923.

* * * * *

Beverly Bayne

February 23, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

It was seven years ago, a beautiful Autumn day, with the leaves turning a russet brown and a rosy red. A little girl with a tan-colored suit and a hat gay with pink roses shading a pair of very dark eyes walked up to the front door of the Essanay studios and in a shy, half-frightened voice asked for a job. The girl at the switchboard, used to coldly turning away dozens of just such girls every day, paused in the gentle art of telling our heroine it was no use, and then took a second look at the big brown eyes, the soft dark hair which fell so softly over the forehead of this child, and said, "Wait a moment."

This scant word of encouragement brought forth a smile and the little girl with the rose-garlanded hat sat down to wait. The wait brought Harry McRae Webster to the front office.

"Well," he said, looking at the girl, "what do you want?"

"I thought--that is, I hoped--you might use me in pictures."

"Ever had any experience?"

"Oh, yes; I have acted lots in school plays," was the naive and entirely unexpected answer.

"Come around tomorrow at 9 o'clock," said Harry Webster, who was at that time director general of the Essanay productions.

The girl--and she was none other, as they say in the thrilling melodramas--was Beverly Bayne, a truant from school, screen struck and dying to get into pictures. Harry Webster came into my office and told me of the little girl who looked about 16 and gave promise of being a raving beauty. Suddenly, as if struck by an inspiration, he said to me:

"You know, I have half a notion to give her a chance in 'The Loan Shark.' You know the story."

I did, for at that time I was scenario editor and a part of my work consisted in buying scripts for the directors to produce; there were only four other directors besides Harry Webster.

"But she hasn't any experience," I said, "and won't Miss B. (the leading woman in Essanay stock) expect to have this story?"

"Yes, yes, I know--but Miss B. is too old; this girl is young and fresh and the type I need."

And so it came about that Beverly Bayne's first appearance in pictures was not as an extra girl, but as the featured player. All the directors at once wanted Beverly Bayne in their productions--pardon, pictures, for one-reel dramas and one-reel comedies were the best Essanay or any of the other companies gave at that time, and were not productions. There was a real Beverly Bayne craze on at the studios with all of the directors clamoring for the new leading lady.

Francis X. Bushman was the leading man. Every one liked Frank in those days, he was such a boy, alternately teasing the girls and wrestling with the men. We were all much like one family--there was only one studio, and actors, directors and writers would congregate in my office to discuss the plays.

Finally Beverly was cast in a Bushman picture. There was great rivalry among the women players to play with Francis Bushman. Beverly took it all as a matter of course, and confided in me she didn't much like Mr. Bushman; he was too big a tease. But Mr. Bushman liked her, and found he could work with her better than with any other actress. He asked for her, until she gradually became associated in the mind of the public as Francis X. Bushman's leading lady.

A better understanding sprang up, but still Beverly was neither infatuated nor especially interested in her leading man. This went on for several years, with the Bushman and Bayne combination growing stronger and more popular, but with no thought of love on either side.

It was after they joined the Metro Company that Beverly suddenly woke to a realization the hero of her screen romance was her real hero. And then, as every one knows, came the marriage of the two who had worked side by side, studying, reading and doing their best to find the art in motion pictures.

This sounds like a history or a biography but it is meant for an interview. But, borrowing Miss Baird Leonard's phrase, it was a mental cross section dancing through the brain waves of my mind as Beverly and I sat and chatted over our tea. She and Francis came in last Sunday to see me and have a cup of tea with me, in my apartment; strange as it seems we are now almost next door neighbors.

The promise Beverly's exquisite girlhood held for beautiful womanhood has been kept. She is one of the best groomed, most attractive, charming young women I know. The influence of her home, for Beverly was gently reared and one of the girls who might have stayed home and had the tender care of a devoted mother if she had not wanted to set out for herself, is always present in her every movement. She is a gentlewoman, well poised and exceptionally entertaining.

Naturally we three reminisced, and chatted over the days when pictures were crude, unfinished affairs.

"Sometimes," said Mr. Bushman, "I smile to myself when I see on the screen little things I did a long time ago. If I should now take one of the copyrighted acts, I should be branded an imitator--when frequently they are the very things we tried out at Essanay."

The two Bushmans are very congenial. They both like riding; they are each passionately fond of dogs, horses and other pets, and they are each students. Francis Bushman is one of the best read men I know. He hasn't the superficial knowledge, which, veneered, suffices to pass as mentality, but he has the real knowledge acquired from much delving into books and constant studying. Beverly is also a brilliant woman, having with the years added to her retentive mind the things worth knowing.

"When I get back to the city from Bushmanor," said Beverly, "I feel stifled. You see, we live outdoors there, ride in the open country and lead

a simple, next-to-nature life."

"You like that way of living now?" I asked her.

"I have never cared for the bright lights nor for the night life in a big city. The cafes, the cabarets and the parties in these places never hold an attraction for me, perhaps because I know so little about them. We lead such a quiet life. I want only a few good friends, my books, my horses and dogs. This is my idea of contentment: I love my home, and am what Frank calls an old-fashioned girl."

"What about your painting?" I asked her, for in the old days Beverly had considerable talent, and her mother always cherished a secret hope that some day the name Beverly Bayne would become associated with the world of art instead of with the plebian motion picture.

"I still love to sketch, and to dabble in water colors, but I have never done more than visit the art galleries, and wish I could create some of the paintings I see there. Art will always be an idealistic longing with me, and one of the things I shall always regret I was unable to accomplish."

The Bushmans were both greatly interested in the Westminster dog show, where Mr. Bushman had entered twelve beautiful Danes, and carried off a motor truck full of ribbons and cups and badges.

"You should see Frank," said Beverly. "He fusses over those dogs, doctors them, bathes them, and sees to it that they have just the right amount of food. Such a barking when he appears; they all know him, and one is jealous of the other in trying to claim his attention."

Francis Bushman loves the country as well as his wife does. It is no affectation, either, for I can remember when he used to tell me the height of his ambition was to make enough money to buy a country estate. Many of the things he hoped for have come to pass--but they have made no change in "Bush," as his friends call him.

The years have improved him, and the Francis Bushman of today, older, graver, but with the same almost foolish desire to have every one like him, is a great improvement over the boy I knew so well at Essanay. He has learned to be less impulsive and less apt to judge other people. I could not

help thinking how much his association with gentle Beverly has helped him. One thing he has retained, and that is his generous spirit. No friend in need ever went to Francis Bushman in vain. He recently took an old director of his, broken in health, to Bushmanor, gave him a home and a chance to earn some money raising chickens. He does not tell these things, and it was only with the greatest reluctance I coaxed the story from Beverly--and then only when this man whom we all knew was mentioned.

Our tea chat reached way into the evening--to the time when they had to hurry home to greet some dinner guests--but we did have such a pleasant afternoon, and I hope they will run in again and have tea with me.

* * * * *

Betty Blythe

May 1, 1921

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

After seeing Betty Blythe on the screen with a few draperies and a couple of beads it was somewhat of a shock to see a young woman step into the lobby of the Gotham Hotel dressed in a modishly tailored suit, with nothing to suggest the gorgeous raiment of the queen. Whatever was missing in the queenly robes was very much present in the beauty of the young woman. She is as handsome as she looked when Solomon was vamped by her on the screen at the Lyric Theatre. I had no reason to believe she would appear in ancient garb, but some way the name of Betty Blythe ever since she made such an impression as the Queen of Sheba has been synonymous with this enchantress of long ago.

The hour was half after twelve o'clock and since Miss Blythe had eaten no breakfast she ushered me into the dining room. Even queens must eat. Her royal highness managed eggs and bacon, toast, marmalade, prunes and tea, proving as well as being beautiful she has a hearty and healthy appetite. Any one who could drive the chariot with the skill and strength of Miss Blythe would need to keep herself in proper physical form.

"How did you manage all those prancing horses," I asked her.

"I suppose I should say it was easy, but I am going to be truthful and tell you it was the most difficult thing I have ever been called upon to do in pictures. I knew if we rehearsed the scene once more I should never have been able to endure the strain. Nell Craig, who drove the other chariot, was so overcome that she fell and broke three ribs just as we were finishing the last scene. There was terrific excitement, with the extras yelling and all of us frightened and trembling with fear that Miss Craig was seriously injured.

"My arms, you see," she said, holding out a pair of shapely hands, "are long, and I am strong. Miss Craig is weaker and she simply could not hold those wild animals a moment longer. Fortunately it was the very last scene. I am sure neither Miss Craig nor myself would be willing to go around those sharp curves again."

Miss Blythe is here to consult with William Fox about going to Europe with J. Gordon Edwards. He is to make "Mary, Queen of Scots," and since "The Queen of Sheba" was such a howling success Mr. Edwards does not wish to change queens. There is no denying Miss Blythe does look like the mythical queens of our childhood days. She is tall, stately, dignified and beautiful. An ideal combination of what queens should be and seldom are. Contracts are stubborn things and up to now Mr. Fox and Miss Blythe have not come to any definite agreement. She wants to go abroad, but there are many things to be considered.

Until she came to New York Mrs. Sheba had not seen herself on the screen. The print of "The Queen of Sheba" was rushed to New York before any of the players had a chance to see the picture. Naturally the first thing Miss Blythe did was to rush to the Lyric and take a look at herself.

"I haven't been East for two years, so I have spent much of my time in the shops and at the theatres. If I should return to the Coast without going to Europe," she said, "I want to see enough good plays to last me for a time."

The stories that Miss Blythe left New York after nearly starving to

death, she says, are very poetic but absolutely without foundation.

"I worked with World and Vitagraph and had a very good salary before I went West to make a Goldwyn picture. I had been on the stage in a Morris Gest production, but I never did the starving in the garret act. I wonder why," she said, "every one always thinks any girl who achieves any degree of fame must have had a miserable hungry time. The chorus is always used to illustrate how far she has advanced."

If Miss Blythe does not go to Europe with the J. Gordon Edwards company she will return to Los Angeles in another week. She says there is only one thing she wishes to have every one know and that is, she is not temperamental.

"I shouldn't like to have any one accuse me of being a creature of moods. I am not a great actress and no one unless she be as famous as Bernhardt or Duse should indulge in temperament. It is unbecoming and foolish."

Miss Blythe admits she is ambitious. She has aspirations and she wants to do something worth while.

"I am grateful," she said, "to the Fox company and Mr. Edwards for the chance to play in 'The Queen of Sheba.' It has inspired me to do other pictures of a similar nature."

The queen, you see, is a mortal, even as you and I. So she finished her breakfast and departed for the dressmaker's for a fitting, for styles do change and one cannot wear beads and draperies outside of a studio.

* * * * *

Clara Bow

July 22, 1923

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

I wish Booth Tarkington could meet Clara Bow. If he has never heard Clara tell of her romances, her ideas on life and the way she manages her

"dad," he has missed getting material for a great juvenile story. Clara is a combination of the Tarkington type of small town girl, and the flapper who now flaps in up-to-date juvenile society. She is the unconscious flapper.

She doesn't hail from Podunk or Cedarville, Iowa, the towns where girls wear the fraternity pins of their best beaux, and consider a high school picnic the essence of hilarity. Clara was born and brought up in Brooklyn, but somehow neither our neighboring city nor the big town of New York has ever touched her. She has remained Clara Bow, high school girl, whose beauty somehow brought her into the fillums, but never made her a part of them.

Clara, who is eighteen this month, and who as naively says she was so "smart" she graduated when she was fifteen, has kept all her old school friends. Her class mates are her beaux, although her father, she says, is very strict and makes her send her company home long before midnight. Her mother died at Christmas time last year, leaving her alone with her father who has tried to mother her as best he could--perhaps spoiling her a little. Everyone does.

Morrie Ryskind insisted that I meet the new Preferred star and take a look at her just to see if I had ever met anything like Miss Bow in motion pictures. I never have.

"What paper do you write on," asked Clara, slipping her hand into mine.

"Shsh"--whispered Morrie, "she is the lady who wrote the nice things about you."

"Oh, I know you are on the Telegram."

"Just having a little joke," groaned Morrie. But Clara hadn't been rehearsed, she said.

"Honest, Mr. Ryskind, I didn't hear her name--"

"Where shall we have luncheon," sighed Morrie, thinking the sooner the affair was over the better for his peace of mind. "Shall we go to the Astor, the Biltmore or the Chatham?"

"Let's go to a chop suey place," said Clara. "I know a wonderful restaurant here on Broadway where they dance at noon--don't you love to dance?"

So Morrie, hoping the din of the Chinese orchestra would drown any additional faux pas lead us to Clara's choice, and in the middle of the day when most of us eat salad or a poached egg, this youngster ate soup, chow mein, salad, ice cream and rice--and with a relish.

So far motion pictures haven't affected her one iota. She is as refreshingly unaffected as if she had never faced a means to pretend. She hasn't any secrets from the world--she trusts everyone, and doesn't believe that any one would be unkind enough to print any of the romances that she loves to tell about. Almost any masquerade firm would pay her a big salary for the use of her name.

She came into pictures after winning a beauty contest. She screens in the vernacular of the studio like a million dollars, and when Elmer Clifton had a look at her big brown eyes, and her round little face, almost like the girl in a picture book, he gave her one of the leading roles in "Down to the Sea in Ships."

"This chance, Clara" said Mr. Clifton (every one calls her Clara), "will either make or break you--it depends upon the success of the picture. Every one knows of the phenomenal success of Mr. Clifton's great whaling picture. It made him, and it made Clara, and led to her getting an offer from J. G. Bachmann to play one of the leading roles in "May Time" for Preferred Pictures.

She has just finished "Grit," with Glenn Hunter. She says she just loves Glenn.

"I went down to see 'Merton of the Movies' the other night and I sat in the front row. Glenn said something about Clara Bow, the motion picture actress, and I was so embarrassed. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Lloyd were in the audience, too, but Glenn didn't see them in time to put them in the play.

"Glenn thinks I could act on the stage. He said maybe sometime he will give me a part in one of his plays."

She thinks Mr. Hunter is a fine actor and dares any one to deny it. In fact, she rather hopes someone will, so she can prove her loyalty to young Merton by having a battle.

Our conversation was mostly about whom Clara adores and whom she does not adore, and what she is going to do in California and the ideal man she expects to marry.

"You know," she said, confidentially, leaning over a dish of chow mein almost as big as she is, "I have had six proposals of marriage; but I didn't love one of them. My daddy says I am too young to marry, anyhow."

"What about the fraternity pin, does that belong to one of the loves?" she was asked.

"No," she explained, "I traded a piece of jewelry I had with a boy because I thought it was pretty. A girl gave it to him--some boy had given it to her--and now it's mine!"

Shades of Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Cornell and any other college where the Greek letter fraternities are in vogue!

"I think you better go back to the office," said Morris, interrupting Clara's rhapsody. "Mr. Beatty wants to see you."

"No, he doesn't, I have to have my picture taken," answered the incorrigible Clara.

But the pictures were as good an excuse as any, and Mr. Ryskind piloted her from the chop suey palace where she pranced across the floor, keeping time to the music like a delighted child.

I thought afterward if the little girl who lives at my house had not been so frightfully grown up she and Clara might have had a good time. We hope some one will tell Mr. Tarkington about Clara so that he will put her in a story. She is almost too good to be true. And to think she is going to Hollywood to play in the "fillums." We only wish some reformer who believes the screen contaminates all who associate with it could meet this child. Still on second thought it might not be safe: Clara uses a dangerous pair of eyes. And as for eyelashes, almost any mascaro would pay her a big salary for the use of her name.

* * * * *

Marguerite Clark

April 10, 1921

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

After she makes two or three more pictures, Marguerite Clark expects to retire to her plantation in the South and raise--flowers. It wouldn't give her much of a pang to exit now, only she feels she would like to make one more big picture and then kiss her fingers good-bye to her public. As far as the stage is concerned, Miss Clark has already sung her swan song--but deep in her heart there is such a warm place for the screen she doesn't want to retire until she has departed in the manner she has planned.

Marguerite's whole life has been arranged in this picturesque fashion, with each event being patterned and fashioned to suit her fastidious little self.

"Do you know," she said, "if I had the forming of my life I would have chosen to marry Harry, and retire from the screen after I had found the man I love, and the home that I enjoy so thoroughly. I love my home, my flowers, my little chickens, and the freedom the country gives me. I am never lonely. Sometimes we go to town for a dinner party or the theatre; often we come to New York for a good time; but when it is over we love going back to our house. It is two miles from New Orleans, and such a great big rambling old place, Harry and I ramble around like two little peanuts."

Harry is H. Palmerston Williams, the attractive husband of Marguerite. They are desperately in love with each other. So much so, Harry wasn't above taking Marguerite's little hand and holding it at Delmonico's when he thought the rest of the luncheon party was too engrossed in talking shop to see him. Marguerite, on the other hand, had to stop talking every few moments to lean over and whisper something in her husband's ear. The correct waiter coughed discreetly whenever he approached, and tried not to show his interest. He was more polite than some of the guests, who stared with frank interest at Mr. and Mrs. H. Palmerston Williams.

In the luncheon party were Mrs. J. Gordon Edwards, wife of the Fox director; their young son Jack, home from Cornell for his Spring vacation; Miss Cora Clark and Miss Wilson. Mr. Edwards acted as stage director for Marguerite at one time and the two families have kept up their close friendship.

"The first time I saw that young man," said Marguerite, nodding at the good-looking young Jack, "was after he had received a terrific bump on his head in the elevator. I was so incensed at the unsympathetic manner in which the elevator man ejected him from the lift I said I would leave the hotel. Mr. Edwards spoke up and said: 'Oh, I wouldn't distress myself; it was probably my son. He is a terror, and he undoubtedly deserved everything he got.'"

"You didn't know how nice I was going to grow up, did you?" said young Edwards, who graduated from Cornell this Summer, and who hasn't decided whether to be an assistant to his father or a business man. He says he is afraid his dad will make a general utility man out of him, and he wouldn't be doing right by Cornell to accept such a menial job.

"You know the day Marguerite speaks about," said Miss Cora, "was her first performance of 'Peter Pan.' Mr. Edwards was her stage director, and I always remember how upset she was over Jack's argument with the elevator boy. We didn't want her to get excited."

"She loves children," said her husband, whereupon young Jack made a grimace. "Children love her, too," said Mr. Williams. "My niece and nephew gave a party, and a youngster said, 'See that pretty little girl there, I am going to have a dance with her.'"

"'That,' said another boy, 'is no little girl, it is Marguerite Clark.'"

"'I don't care, she looks like a little girl,' he said."

"Speaking of 'Peter Pan,' who do you think should play Peter in the Famous Players-Lasky screen version?" asked Mrs. Edwards.

"I refuse to answer," said Mr. Williams, "on advice of counsel. I am too prejudiced."

"I read with interest the Morning Telegraph series on the choice for

Peter Pan," said Miss Cora.

"That reminds me," said young Jack, "we have dozens of letters recommending Marguerite."

"That is because I played the part on the stage," said Miss Clark.

"Would you like to play it?"

"I would love to," she said. "I have always wanted to make 'Peter Pan' in pictures, and I must admit nothing would make me happier."

We asked Marguerite if she didn't sometimes have a hankering for New York and the theatres.

"I never expected to be as contented in my life as I am now," she said. "Do you know what I bought here?"

"Clothes," said young Jack.

"Oh, that goes without saying, but I mean we have bought seeds of all sorts, garden trowels, and everything to make my Southern garden beautiful. Harry raises chickens," she said. "He has his part of the garden and I have my part, and if his chickens run into my flowers there will be an instant annihilation of one part of the farm's product, and it will not be my posies."

This threat amused Miss Clark's husband so much he had to give her hand one more surreptitious squeeze. He seems to think everything she says is amusing; in fact, he appreciates all her merry little witticisms.

I wondered if he didn't get jealous of the attention she attracts. Apparently not, for he seems to enjoy having her admired, and beamed when people pointed to her admiringly. Happiness has certainly been a great tonic, for she looks younger and prettier than ever.

Her husband wishes she would not consider it necessary to make other pictures, but he says if she feels she wants to make one or two before she retires, he will not interfere.

"What about the stage?"

"That is different," promptly answered Marguerite. "I wouldn't be willing to stay away from my beau that long."

As we were leaving, Marguerite spied Wesley Barry and tried to attract

his attention.

"He only cares for me," she said, "when he is trying to raise money. When he came South he invited me to give to the Near-East fund, and seemed to like me when I helped him."

Mr. and Mrs. Williams return home today after having spent a brief week in New York. She is one of the best arguments I know against the old-fashioned theory that no actress is content away from the stage. Marguerite Clark says she is happier than she has ever been in her life, and she certainly looks it.

* * * * *

Elsie Ferguson

February 16, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The interview about to be transcribed on this crumpled piece of copy paper should have been written a week ago, for it was then I talked with Elsie Ferguson, and came back to my typewriter, my office and my Roget's Thesaurus with a feeling of exaltation. Elsie Ferguson has that effect, she is stimulating, constantly buoying one up by her mentality, and by her human outlook on life's tangled problems.

Now there comes to me a vision of her beauty, and a remembrance of the pleasant hour I spent with her in her apartment on Park avenue, but with no definite recollection of all we said--and we said much after the fashion of two women who are left alone to talk for a solid hour.

The interview took place on a Friday morning very early, at the time the world likes to picture actresses and women who lead leisure lives just opening their eyes, having their breakfasts served on a silver salver, by a neat maid, in a shell pink boudoir, with its curtains, its rugs and its furnishings all harmonizing in color.

Yes, dear readers, that is the way this story should be written, I know

according to the Hoyle of fiction. But that isn't the way it happened. I arrived at Miss Ferguson's apartment bright and early and was met at the door by the young woman herself in a street frock of dark green velvet, looking as if she had been up for several hours at least. From this most matter of fact beginning you can readily see Miss Ferguson is not idle, and neither has she acquired the habits of the leisure class who, before the war made people realize there was work to be done, never gazed upon the morning sun. It didn't take me long after Miss Ferguson started to talk to decide she refutes the old axiom that beauty and brains seldom go hand in hand. She has a liberal share of both, a thing which has elevated her to an enviable place of esteem in the hearts of the picture world. We spoke about the screen as a medium of describing emotion, and what improvements might be expected to come within the next few years in the art of the motion picture.

"If we are to advance," said Miss Ferguson, "I believe it will be a technical advancement. Some one will invent a camera powerful enough to take distances and close-ups at one time. I always feel after a scene has been taken, and I have to pose again for a close-up, how sorry I am that my face cannot be photographed when I am actually engaged in a big dramatic scene. It is difficult to get back to the place where the camera caught me a few moments previous. Usually my feet must be kept on a spot marked for them, and I am conscious of being cramped and forced to stay in a small place."

By this Miss Ferguson does not mean she dislikes motion pictures. She merely, like all folk who study the needs of the screen, is constantly groping about for a better way of doing things. Elsie Ferguson is not bound to pictures commercially, though she does make \$1,000 every day she works, and has a maid, car and other accessories furnished her by the Famous Players-Lasky Company, whose treasury she enriches.

"I cannot truthfully say I do not miss the stage," was the answer given by Miss Ferguson to a tactless question as to whether or not sometimes there did not come a longing to get back before the footlights. "Quoting from 'Dear Brutus,' where the man says the woman is so fluid, I would say the stage is so fluid. That is what I miss--not so much the audience, though it

is pleasing to get recognition for one's art, but the something the stage possesses that is not possible to get on the screen."

Elsie Ferguson is responsible for a vogue in pictures for which many of us are grateful. Up to the time she brought her youth, her good looks and her stage experience to the screen, we were overwhelmed with curls, and short-frocked little girls, whose only claim to picture fame was a mop or tangled hair and babyish star. Elsie Ferguson, by her graciousness, by her well-bred manner of doing things, and her knowledge of what to wear and what not to wear, gave [those] ambitious to be motion picture stars a new ideal to copy.

This conservative, gentle breeding is not a camouflage adapted as a screen disguise; it is as much a part of the real Elsie Ferguson as her hand or her foot. Her whole bearing, from the top of her golden head to the toe of her tiny shoe (it is small--I noticed it) is that of a gentlewoman. One wouldn't have to be in Miss Ferguson's presence or her home many minutes to get this as a first impression.

Her home, who was it that said, "Show me the home and I will tell you the character of the people who live there"? Elsie Ferguson's home is the sort of livable place you would associate with that. There is nothing ornate, garish or over-decorative. The lamps, the grand piano, the table with its magazines and books, the vases here and there, all bespeak refinement, good taste and breeding.

Miss Ferguson, besides having a place in the picture and theatrical world, has a very definite social position given her by her marriage with Major T. B. Clarke. I might have said, primarily given her, for she has kept this place, and has by her charm, her beauty and her intelligence, made many friends in the social world.

In speaking of Elsie Ferguson and the high regard in which she is held, a woman well known in literary circles spoke of seeing Miss Ferguson at the opera. At the conclusion of the last act Miss Ferguson rose, and walked out.

"It was," said this woman, "as if a princess were leaving. The audience unconsciously stood still and looked at the slender, graceful figure wrapped in a chinchilla coat, and then as if unconsciously walked out after her."

Ask her about suffrage, and about the uplift of the shop girl, said some one.

It seemed absurd to ask Elsie Ferguson about suffrage.

A woman with her mentality, her poise and her conception of life could not help believing in suffrage.

"I have believed in woman's equality for many years," she said. "The old belief that a woman's place is in her home is all very well. We all like our homes, and need them; but why spend the time in the manual labor of a home, when we can get people who can do it much better than we can."

"Shall I say you would love to have a rose-covered cottage, with plenty of house-work?" I asked.

"The cottage sounds all right, but I am not so sure I would add the plenty of hard work," she said, smiling.

Elsie Ferguson in a cottage in the kitchen takes a strength and a depth of imagination which I do not possess. I could better picture her on a throne giving orders and receiving messages from an assembled multitude.

As for the shop girl. This question was born of the knowledge that Elsie Ferguson does many little kindnesses quietly, and without ostentation for some of the girls less fortunate than her gorgeous self.

"The average shop girl of today seems well able to cope with the world," said Miss Ferguson. "She is taught this necessity in moving pictures, and in books. The girl of today is taught to face the world, and the salaries these girls get are usually sufficient to keep them until they can get something better. The woman who starts out to make a living will keep advancing if she has the right stuff in her. If she doesn't it is her own fault. I am not putting this down as a hard and fast rule. There are exceptions, and these cases should, of course, be helped."

Right now Miss Ferguson is in Palm Beach--no, not vacationing, but working on a new production. She hasn't, she said, had a vacation in so long she feels her nerves are on edge and her mind weary for the need of some recreation.

Will Elsie Ferguson return to the stage?

It is possible, though such a move would not necessarily interfere with her screen work. She could do both. It is a well-known fact Miss Ferguson has had several plays submitted to her by theatrical managers within the past few months, but up to last week she had made no decision. She has a contract with the Famous Players-Lasky Company, and she has expressed herself on several occasions as being satisfied with the treatment she has received and of being eager to make other pictures, and better ones.

"We need better stories," she said, "and we need them badly."

There were many more things we discussed, but as I said above, Elsie Ferguson and I, like Alice and the Walrus, found the time had come to talk of many things, and, being women, we talked them, and no one could ever record everything a woman said.

* * * * *

Dorothy Gish

November 9, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The younger daughter of the Gish family arrived in New York three weeks later than her mother and sister. Lillian and her mother brought three birds, a canary and a parrot and eight hat boxes. Dorothy worried along without any birds but she made up for this oversight by getting in Chicago with five suitcases. She lost one there somewhere between the New York Central station and the Blackstone, and landed in New York with only four.

"It was either the fault of the hotel clerk or the taxi driver," she said. "Hotel clerks and taxi drivers are my pet aversion, and I hate them more than anything in the world."

Dorothy, standing about five feet, very young, very slender and looking not a day over seventeen, had given her denunciation of the race of hotel clerks and taxi drivers in such a fierce tone we all laughed.

"You needn't laugh," said Dorothy. "That clerk at the Blackstone Hotel

in Chicago acted as if I were a stray dog. I asked him if I could get a room and bath.

"He said, 'Certainly not; there isn't an empty room in the house.'

"'Will you please tell me where I can go,' I pleaded

"'No where,' he said. 'There is a convention in town and the hotels are full.'

"Then he called a boy and I fully expected to be kicked down the steps. Instead he had the boy take me to a wash room to wait, saying he would see what he could do. I waited three hours and I never heard from him until train time. I always have been afraid of hotel clerks, and now I am in abject terror of them. If one says boo to me here at the Commodore I shall make for cover."

The young lady who is afraid of hotel clerks just a moment before had spoken nonchalantly of her own company. Another incongruous remark which made me smile.

"Why do you smile?" she asked.

"When you speak of your own company," I told her, "it sounds so important. And then in the next breath you say you fear the very people you might be expected to wither with a look."

"That's the way I am," she said. "Do you know New York stifles me? It makes me so unhappy. There are so many things I want, and so many things I cannot afford to have. I don't see how people ever have money enough to live here."

"Dorothy is right about being unhappy," said her mother. "She hasn't smiled since she came here. We went to a fortune-teller in Los Angeles, and he told me I would be surrounded with great hustle and bustle. And there would appear constantly in this great commotion an figure with a scornful expression."

"I am it," explained Dorothy, "but I am no longer scornful; merely bewildered at the high cost of living."

"Do what Marie Doro suggests in New York," advised the gentle Lillian--
"wear your old clothes and be dowdy with good grace."

"What a blow all this high price of living sorrow would give the public," I thought. "All the world believes motion picture stars wear sables on Monday, mink on Tuesday, ermine on Wednesday, and other furs the rest of the week. The dear public believes to be a motion picture star means to have every whim granted at the drop of a hat."

"I thought motion picture stars--" I began.

"You thought like all the world," interrupted Dorothy, "that we were in the millionaire class. We do not get paid the exorbitant salaries folk believe, but because of our wealthy reputation we are made to suffer by dentists, doctors, lawyers, milliners, modistes and all down the line. I had two tiny cavities filled, and what do you think my dentist charged me--\$350 for less than an hour's work!"

"You didn't pay him?"

"No, I left town, but I cannot always leave town when a bill is sent to me three or four times in excess of what I ought to pay. I shall have mother send him \$100, which is enough for the work he has done--and then if he insists I shall tell my troubles to a judge and let him decide the issue."

This interview was really to be with Dorothy, and I went over to the Commodore Hotel to have luncheon with her. Lillian and Mrs. Gish, whom I know better than the younger Gish, were also invited to Dorothy's party. The two sisters are entirely unlike--Lillian, fair and stately; Dorothy, brown-haired, less stately and with a sense of humor that is infectious. I expected to see the black bobbed wig, and looked in surprise at the light brown hair coiled so neatly on her head.

"Everyone looks for my wig," said Dorothy. "I am glad to stop playing for a few weeks to get rid of wearing it. My hair is a surprise and a disappointment to everyone."

"Not a disappointment," I corrected: "I like it better."

In the interval while we waited for Lillian to get her mother, Dorothy told me she thought "Broken Blossoms" the best picture she had ever seen. "When I see Lillian in that picture, I make up my mind never to make another picture," she said. Which was a fine tribute from one sister to another.

I understood this remark later, when Dorothy, almost in tears over her picture at the Rialto this past week said: "Comedy is the most unsatisfactory thing in the world. You never know how it's going to turn out. I started to make a drama a few weeks ago and it turned out a comedy. And we all work so hard. That's all I do--work work work.

"Everyone who makes a success has to work," her mother said. "Look at Mr. Griffith, how hard he works."

"And what does it get him," was Dorothy's reply.

"Why, Dorothy," interrupted Lillian, "that is a strange remark."

"O you know what I mean," Dorothy hastened to explain. "I mean what good does it do anyone to kill themselves working, because the worms will get you in the end."

After which philosophy Mrs. Gish, youthful and pretty enough to be a sister to the girls, gently reproved her younger daughter for this outburst.

The Gish girls would surprise many of these reformers who think monopoly of the world's iniquity is embodied in motion picture stars. They are sort of girls you would like to have your own daughters associate with--wholesome, clean, gently bred, and testifying to American womanhood at its best.

Dorothy is the comedienne of the family, and when she ceases to smile there is a general cause for alarm. Her mother fussed over her, worried about her unhappiness and tried her best to make her youngest born forget the disadvantages of living in a big city. Mothers are pretty much alike the world over, whether they belong to famous stars or just ordinary folk. And Mrs. Gish is very much a real mother. Her girls will tell you that. They give her credit for most of their accomplishments.

After luncheon in their apartment, where they insisted I go to make the acquaintance of John, the parrot, who creaks out in a funny little voice, "Mother, Lillian and Dot," they spoke of the farm they hope to buy, a nine-acre place in the country near the studio, where New York and its wicked allurements of frocks and frills will not be so distressingly near. Where Dorothy can keep a red cow that gives a quart of milk at twenty cents per each day, and where nice white chickens lay dollar a dozen eggs. It's the

life for Dorothy, according to her own confession.

One the way to my office Mrs. Gish walked back from the hotel with me. She said Dorothy had seven more pictures to make for Paramount, and Lillian's picture making with the other stars and Griffith players for United Artists would not affect Dorothy, who remains with Adolph Zukor at least during the term of her contract.

And in conversation with this wise little mother I learned the real reason why Dorothy does not buy out the Fifth Avenue shops. Her mother insists that the girls each save a part of their salaries.

"For," she said in explanation, "when they grown older their earning capacity may grown less, and you know girls seldom think this can happen. They believe their salary is a fixed income for life."

And I went back to my desk, thinking of all the good fortune fate had put in the path of the Gishes, the best of all was the mother they had chosen for themselves.

* * * * *

Juanita Hansen

May 2, 1920

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Juanita Hansen says she supposes she should have given her parents their wish and been a brunette. She was named Juanita before she was born after the song which had played a part in her parents' courting days. Juanita, suggesting Spanish, Oriental and dark-eyed, was a misnomer so far as the flaxen-haired Hansen baby was concerned. But then how could parents of Swedish ancestry expect a child with Spanish characteristics.

"The name Hansen never seemed to belong to the Juanita," said the young lady herself, "but I refused to change it for Imogene Winthrop or Gladys Dewdrop, because I wanted to keep my own identity and I had a peculiar feeling the loss of my name meant a metamorphis of my personality--and that's

one thing I prefer to keep always.

"And there," went on this young lady, "my name has brought me many adventures. The other night a party of us went to see a burlesque show--"

"Sh-sh," put in Don Meaney, supervising director, manager and adviser of Miss Hansen. "I don't believe I would mention going in a burlesque show."

"Why not?" demanded Miss Hansen, "I went, didn't I?"

Resuming the interrupted thread and quite undaunted by the thought passed on to her that she should mention symphony concerts, the opera and Shakespearean plays, but leave the word burlesque out of the conversation, she proceeded.

"In the dressing room at the burlesque theatre was a woman of rather superior bearing. I smiled unconsciously at her and she smiled back. 'Professional?' she asked me. I replied in the affirmative and then she said, 'What is your name?' 'Juanita Hansen,' I answered.

"'Juanita,' she repeated. 'Juanita. I was an actress twenty years ago and I made my greatest hit singing 'Juanita.'"

"She sang for me, and I have never heard a clearer, sweeter voice. I was touched at her present plight and it made a deeper impression on me than any sermon I ever heard. Here she was, old and unknown, and at one time she had been the toast of the town. It made me do some thinking.

"And so after all the name may be a talisman," Miss Hansen said.

Miss Hansen, whose pet diversion, according to Don Meaney, is taming lions, modified the lion statement somewhat. I expected it would be modified. You see, I knew Don Meaney when he was inventing tales for Essanay as director of publicity and advertising and, if I do say it, there were few better on original ideas. In most cases he had the cooperation of his subject but in the case of Juanita Hansen this reversal to its press agent days was nipped promptly in the bud.

Apropos of lions and household pets, Don had a good one up his sleeve. He told of Miss Hansen doing a regular Daniel in the lions' den scene, with snarling, growling, ferocious beasts. An aeroplane passed the cage and Juanita, the lion tamer, looked up and naively remarked.

"Isn't he brave. I don't see how he dares to do those stunts in midair."

But, alas, the lady should have been rehearsed. Before Don finished she said: "Why, I don't remember that."

Somehow one unconsciously associates Juanita Hansen with the Mack Sennett girls. Mr. Sennett, like Flo Ziegfeld, always picks the good looking ones and to say, "Oh she is a Sennett girl" is a recommendation such as being listed in Bradstreet and Dun gives one in the financial world. It was during these pie-throwing hectic days that the name Juanita Hansen first became known in motion pictures. She had played in other pictures, but until she was lined up with the Sennett bevy of loveliness she did not register with such a bang.

And yet, despite all this remembrance of her Keystone days, it is interesting to know she only made actually three pictures for the Sennett company.

"I never could understand," she said, "why people continually refer to me as a Keystone girl. I served a very brief period throwing pies. I did not like comedy, and slap-stick comedy I loathed. I hated it so much I left the Keystone company with only \$200 to my name and no job in sight. Mr. Sennett had always been so kind to me I made my getaway while he was out of the city. I was afraid I would be overpersuaded by him, and I knew that pie-throwing was not my forte."

Miss Hansen's desire for serious roles were answered in serials. She played a few features, but her intrepid spirit, her absolute fearlessness in riding, climbing and swimming made her the ideal serial type. Her greatest success has been won in these continued next week films. She is now making a serial for Pathe, which both Mr. Meaney and Pathe do not hesitate to say has every thrill yet invented in the mind of men.

Curious enough, she is something of the type of Pearl White, whose serial episodes and escapades have been household words. Like Pearl White, she photographs exceptionally well. Not only do her moving pictures give credit to her good looks, but her still pictures are exceptionally

attractive. She is one of the women who look as well in pictures as she does off the screen.

"I have a chance to make five-reel features when my present contract expires," said Miss Hansen, "but I love serials. You are sure of having your pictures shown for eighteen weeks consecutively in the theatre where it is booked, and if you have any claim for fame or for the affection of the public I think you are more apt to win their affection by keeping in constant touch with them."

But one thing Miss Hansen regrets about her present contract is the necessity for her leaving the Coast.

"You see, I was born and brought up in California," she said. "All my life I had a horse to ride, a garden and plenty of room to breathe. I feel like a lost soul in this city where every one lives so close together and there is no opportunity for real fresh air."

"New York cramps her style," put in Don Meaney, feeling he had been neglected long enough.

"It's a wonderful city," she said. "I adore the shops; I love Fifth avenue, and as for the theater I never had a chance to see so many plays at one time."

"You do not come here often?"

"It's my first visit here," she admitted. "You see, I have always lived in the West, and there was never any occasion for my coming East."

And then Don Meaney, who had been chafing at his bit for the last fifteen minutes, proceeded to tell the things Miss Hansen mapped out to see in the big city.

After her very simple admission of never having seen New York before one feels decided admiration for her truth and simplicity. She makes no pretense of being traveled, learned or wise. She is as she is. If you like her, she is glad; if you don't, well that is your privilege. As for the chance to make a big salary, it's like a fairy tale in her life. To have all she wants to spend is as if she had stepped into some other girl's shoes.

It is said one finds this simplicity more in the West. If true, Juanita

Hansen is the very spirit of the West in her mannerisms, her hail fellow well met attitude and her absence from affectation. She is not blase. She has not burned the candle at both ends. Life holds much for her, and it isn't going to be her fault if she doesn't get all that is coming to her.

She said frankly she came to New York alone.

"Why shouldn't I?" she asked. "I had Mr. and Mrs. Meaney, and I am not afraid. I have taken care of myself alone ever since I was fourteen. I have taken care of my mother, too. She has depended upon me, and if I had been a coward what would have become of us? We would have been swallowed up, and I would probably be clerking in a store or working in a factory."

So 'tis plain to be seen Miss Hansen has more in that small head of hers than her light, fluffy hair, and she will manage to take care of herself. Yes, we think she will without the slightest difficulty.

* * * * *

[The following woman is not really an "actress", but she did appear in her husband's documentary films, and the interview is interesting enough that it is included here.]

Osa Johnson

March 23, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Tomorrow Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson put behind them for three long years every comfort of civilization. They start on the first lap of a journey which will take them into the depths of tropical forests, and into the wilds of the South Sea Islands, where natives roam about in their birthday clothes and choose as their special desert a compote made of man's flesh.

A woman who has lived in a palm-thatched hut, away from the electric lights, the pavements and the luxury of hot and cold showers, has had

adventures the rest of us in our civilized life have been denied. Mrs. Johnson, therefore, appealed to me as a woman whom I should like to meet. I had pictured her as reflecting some of the color of her South Sea Island existence, and was surprised to see standing before me a fair-haired, slender young woman who looked as if she has never been away from Broadway and its alluring atmosphere.

The Johnson apartment was filled with trunks, bags and suitcases containing, Mrs. Johnson told me, the most precious belongings of these two wanderers, who were storing all of their best-loved treasures. There was no suggestion of the South Sea Islands in this New Yorky apartment fitted out with all the up-to-date necessities, with the exception of a chatter of speaking birds, which floated from the dining-room into the living room, and gave out the shrill sound of the far-away tropics.

There are three of the birds left out of the nine Mrs. Johnson brought with her from the islands. One of them, a rare specimen of parrot, brilliant in plumage and gorgeous in color. Two of them are white birds, pink-tinted and noisier than the parrot. Such a commotion and chattering. They answered in squeaky tones the voice of their mistress, showing almost uncanny intelligence in recognizing her.

"Weren't you afraid," I asked Mrs. Johnson, "to live among those wild bushmen on the islands?"

"I was frightened," she said, "of course, though I loved the free outdoor life. I spent my time swimming, hunting and fishing; I lived in my bathing suit or in silk pajamas; it is so hot you simply cannot dress. The British Government begged Mr. Johnson not to risk his life, but ever since he took a trip on the schooner Snark with Jack London he has longed to continue his exploration and to get pictures of this 'great unfiled' country."

The Johnsons have been married nine years, although Mrs. Johnson might easily pass for a girl of eighteen. She and her husband have never been separated for a day, and when he announced to her it was the ambition of his life to film these savages of the South Sea Islands and put into motion pictures the bushmen of the back country of the Malista, she insisted upon

facing all of the dangers with him.

"We were saved," Mrs. Johnson said, "by the timely arrival of a British man-of-war, lying in a nearby harbor. The natives are terrified by the machine guns. One time some of the sailors landed and were immediately killed by the savages. The machine gun on the ship was turned on them and they were mowed down like so many stalks of grain. Ever since that time they have had a wholesome fear of the man-of-war, and we owe our deliverance and our safety to its power."

An adventurous part of the Johnson journey will be a visit to old Chief Nagapate, the cruel chieftain of the South Island, who finds the flesh of human beings the most tempting dish obtainable for his dinner. The chief was the hero in a film taken by Mr. Johnson, and upon his return he hopes to pay his respects to this unwilling star by projecting this picture on a screen.

"This," said Mrs. Johnson, "will be the first picture ever shown on the island, and if the picture does not frighten the life out of Nagapate, it will at least make him treat us with more respect than he did on our last visit."

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson will go alone on their expedition. They are accustomed to the life on the islands and Mr. Johnson feels they can get better results with the natives by approaching them alone. Aside from the photographic equipment, containing special lenses for microscopic work, special metals made to resist the heat of the tropics, long-distance lenses, five different kinds of cameras and a complete developing and printing apparatus, there will be gifts for the natives.

"We are taking gay beads, jumping jacks, tobacco, knives, hatchets, bolts of calico, old hats, fancy dress costumes, and things which will appeal to the simple souls of these untamed children of nature.

"Speaking of calico," said Mrs. Johnson, "they love it. They will disappear and wrap themselves in yards of it, showing they have instinctive modesty as well as a love of color. People have laughed at me when I say the South Sea Islanders have more morals than the average white man. In all the three years we spent with these people I never saw them do one thing out of

the way--they are cruel, but so far as their morals are concerned I might say they are unblemished."

Mrs. Jack London visited the Johnsons in the Fall, and it is the intention of Mrs. Johnson to return the visit when they get to San Francisco.

"You know Jack London was my husband's dearest friend," she said. "It seems hard that the Londons had to be separated, they were so well mated and so happy. Charmain and he were so congenial. She would rough it and live close to nature the way he liked, forgetting the luxuries at home. The first Mrs. London adored society and liked to have Mr. London appear every evening in dinner clothes and live in the correct manner in which she was accustomed. He hated all that sham, and they didn't get along well together."

Mr. Johnson, his wife explained, was a member of the original crew that sailed from the Golden Gate harbor on the schooner Snark for the South Sea Islands.

It is Mr. Johnson's intention to send his completed film to the traders at Sydney, Australia, to deliver it to Robertson-Cole here in New York, so all the time this intrepid pair are facing the fascinating experience of perhaps being cooked for dinner, the world will be seeing their pictures.

One of their expeditions will take them among a class of people who place a stone[...] substitute will have to do. They live on canned foods.

Don't you think, girls, all the things so dear to the feminine heart and regarded as so altogether necessary, is a lot to give up for art and one's husband?

* * * * *

Alice Joyce

January 5, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Alice Joyce is shy. She is self-conscious, frightened to the point of tears at crowds, dislikes to meet new people, and constantly bemoans the fact

that she lacks the necessary poise and savoir faire for attractive, well balanced womanhood.

The above description is exactly what Miss Joyce thinks of herself, and a very accurate analysis of the mental picture she carries of her own importance. It is not the way the world measures her, nor the impression I gained after a delightful two hours spent over the luncheon table with her. In fact, the mental picture I carried away was the direct opposite from her own frank declaration of her short-comings.

My meeting Alice Joyce was the climax of a long desired opportunity to speak and to have a chance to converse with a young woman whose name I have probably written some five hundred times in my life. Since those days in 1910 and 1911, when Kalem, as one of the foremost film producing companies, and Alice Joyce as the star of one-reel dramas, were in the picture ascendant, Miss Joyce has had a tremendous hold on the public. Even during the days when she returned to give her undivided attention to her little daughter, there were always requests for Alice Joyce stories and questions as to when she would come back to the waiting public. Therefore when her secretary called me on the phone, I felt Miss Joyce must have realized how much I wanted to know her.

Our appointment was at the Claridge, and we were both on time. She was nice enough to say this desire to have a chat was mutual. If Miss Joyce had told me of her extreme shyness before we walked into the dining room I might have believed her, but after seeing her queenly quiet unconsciousness of all the stares and nods in her direction, I knew she was nothing she thought and everything she didn't think; which, after all, is rather nice, especially when one hasn't even a bowing acquaintance with the word conceit.

Miss Joyce acknowledges she owes a very great debt of gratitude to the Kalem Company for taking her when she was a novice and for steering her safely by all the camera pitfalls.

"In those days," she said, "I didn't even know I must not look into the camera. I didn't know the first thing about picture acting, and I don't mind telling you it took patience and perseverance to teach me what to do and what

not to do."

One does not have to have a key to the book on human-nature to get a keen insight into the character of Alice Joyce. She breathes a veritable atmosphere of real womanhood. One man said, in speaking of Miss Joyce, a woman with eyes like hers could never be anything but sweet and kind. If the eyes are the windows of the soul, Alice Joyce must have a Madonna-like quality in her nature, for she has the most perfect Madonna eyes I have ever seen. They are a replica of the painting of the Madonnas of every country. One couldn't name any special picture, for her eyes are like them all, and she instinctively gives one a feeling she is everything her eyes claim for her.

It was while Miss Joyce was playing in Kalem pictures that she was wooed and won by Tom Moore, one of the stalwart Moore boys. This romance, which started out so auspiciously, was blasted by mutual consent. Ordinarily one stays religiously away from the subject when there is a domestic breach, but Miss Joyce herself introduced Mr. Moore into the conversation so easily and so gracefully we felt no restraint in speaking of him.

"Mr. Moore deserves the great success he has made with the Goldwyn Company, for he has brains and ability, and is one of the best juvenile actors in the country today. I was so pleased to have one of the Goldwyn executives tell me how well his pictures are going throughout the country," is the way she commented upon Tom Moore.

This was said with a ring of sincerity, too, for although Miss Joyce and Mr. Moore are separated they are still good friends and have never reached the point of stabbing each other with unprintable words for weapons.

I couldn't help thinking what Owen Moore had said to me at the Sixty Club. Alice Joyce was there dancing and looking particularly lovely in a pale yellow satin frock.

"Alice Joyce, in my opinion," said her one-time brother-in-law, "is the most beautiful woman here tonight."

This was after the separation, and was said after Owen Moore had commented several times on how much he liked Alice Joyce.

The brown tones in the smart street suit Miss Joyce wore harmonized most amazingly with the dark brown of her eyes. I accused her of planning her costume to match her eyes. She disclaimed all such intention, by declaring colors were the bane of her existence.

"I never know what colors are becoming to me," she said. "I seem to have no faculty for getting the right shades to wear. The one thing I have admired, especially about Blanche Sweet is her judgment in knowing what colors suit her, and planning all her frocks and hats with those certain tones in mind."

We spoke of art and music and gossiped a little as two women who have the screen at heart are bound to do. Alice Joyce makes no pretension of being a high brow, but she has an innate liking for things fine and real. To associate her with anything common and ordinary would be to depreciate the value of a fine bit of statuary or to lower the worth of a choice engraving. She is a woman who has a set standard for herself, and whatever obstacles lie in her path she seems bent on following out her own idealism.

Usually women who give out this impression create the idea of painful prudery and forced goodness. One cannot accuse Alice Joyce of trying to set herself up on a pedestal. She does not criticize other people nor does she loudly cry out her own virtues. She merely lives as she believes is right, permitting the rest of the world to follow its own sweet will.

Only Alice Joyce is not shy, she is not self-conscious, and she does not lack poise. These are the bugbears that worry her, but they are needless causes for fear, for only to herself does Miss Joyce give out the impression of being anything but extremely well poised and entirely able to meet folk and cope with them in conversation, and match with them her own wit and repartee.

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Mae Marsh

April 15, 1923

Louella Parsons
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Mae Marsh, who returns to the Griffith fold in "The White Rose" after an absence of six years, comes back in an unexpected fashion. The little sister of "the Birth of a Nation," the pathetic little wife of "Intolerance," and the sweet and heroine of numberless Griffith dramas, plays an up-to-date "flapper."

"Instead of having the hero court me," said Mae, "I run after him, decking myself in the garb of the up-to-date flapper and pursuing him relentlessly. I had to study the psychology of the flapper, because she is a rare avis to me. In the past I have played the ingenue variety--the girl who wears a white dress and blue sash and who peers shyly upon the world through a mass of tangled curls. In "The White Rose" my hair is bobbed and I forgo all my former earmarks of girlish sweetness. I become a brazen overdressed girl whose world is clothes."

Be this as it may, the "flapper" must have her moments of pathos, because every one in the Griffith office who saw "The White Rose" shed buckets of tears. "Jack" Lloyd, who says he has a stony heart that never melts, cried all over his new monogrammed handkerchief.

"How did it seem to be working again for Mr. Griffith?" Mae was asked.

"Very strange," she replied. "I have had so many poor directors during the six years' interval since I left him--it took me several weeks to get used to his way of directing me.

"Do you know," she said earnestly, "I never realized how wonderful Mr. Griffith is. Up to the time I left the Griffith company to go with Goldwyn I had never worked for anyone else. I came to the old Biograph studios as a child and I thought all directors were like Mr. Griffith, but I hadn't been away from him very long before I knew why his pictures were better. There is as much difference between Mr. Griffith and the average director as there is between a genuine Corot painting and a badly executed imitation.

"In Florida," said Miss Marsh, "the people could not believe Mr. Griffith was a real director. They had seen directors wearing knee breeches

and puttees, dressed in the height of fashion, going in swimming every day and creating a great deal of attention, and here was a man whose first thought was his picture. We worked like slaves and so did he. He didn't have time for any nonsense. As for dressing the part--he always wears the oldest clothes he owns when he is making a picture. His recreation was dining with the McLeans on the Pioneer, the houseboat where President and Mrs. Harding were guests and he had dinner with William Jennings Bryan several times."

Miss Marsh herself dined with Mr. Bryan and visited the McLeans.

Now that she has finished her picture with Mr. Griffith she is formulating new plans for making pictures. She says these plans are too vague to be made public yet, but she knows what she wants to do and if she is able to get the right story she will be ready in a month to tell her secrets. Before she does anything she is going to her home in California with her husband and daughter and take a rest.

One of Miss Marsh's most recent pictures is "Paddy the Next Best Thing." This is based on a play that ran in London for three years with Peggy O'Neil in the leading role.

Lee Arms, who is Miss Marsh's husband, says he doesn't wish to be prejudiced, but he thinks it is about the best English-made film he has ever seen and he says his wife does some work that reminds him of the old-time Griffith pictures.

Meanwhile, every one is waiting to see "The White Rose." In addition to Miss Marsh, Carol Dempster, Ivor Novello and Neil Hamilton, the Griffith find, are in the cast. It is said every Griffith picture brings some heretofore unknown player into notice and at the Griffith office they are saying that Neil Hamilton is this discovery.

With Mae the day I had luncheon with her was her mother, Mrs. Marsh, who has kept her figure and who has masses of red gold hair that made her look as if she might be a sister, but never old enough to be the mother of Mae and the grandmother of little Mary Marsh Arms. Mrs. Marsh, with two actresses in the family and a son, who is considered one of the best cameramen in the

field, knows all about motion pictures, and she was particularly eager to have Mae make a picture with Mr. Griffith. Marguerite Marsh is in vaudeville doing, her mother says, very well and so happy she hasn't thought of returning to the screen.

I asked Mae if Mr. Griffith found her any different from the girl he trained in the ways of the screen.

"Some older," she said, "but just as eager to please him and get my scenes the way he thought they should be played.

"The sad part," said Mae, "is after playing with him I am going to be very hard to please in the matter of a director. He always knows exactly what he wants--and some of the directors I have worked for have made it necessary for me to go ahead and do most of picture myself."

"The interest Mr. Griffith keeps in his former players," Mae says, "is one of the finest things about him.

"He talked of Mary Pickford, Lillian and Dorothy Gish and expressed interest in their work and recalled the old days when they all worked in the old Biograph studios.

"Days that were history-making because they were the beginning of better motion pictures. Days when one-reelers were the fashion and big salaries were unheard of.

"Most of us," said Mae, "leave when we get big salaries, but most of us are willing to return for less money because we know the picture will be good and that is something no one can promise with other directors. Mr. Griffith has only made one poor picture."

And because I refuse to admit that picture was poor I am not going to tell which one Mae considers beneath his art. Anyway, we all have a right to our opinions.

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Violet Mersereau

December 18, 1921

Louella Parsons
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Christmas in Rome is one thing to read about, but another thing to experience. Violet Mersereau took all this into consideration when the chance was given her to either stay in sunny Italy and Christmas with strangers or hurry to the steamer homeward bound and reach New York in time to hang up her stocking on U. S. soil. Being 100 per cent American, her choice was easy. She arrived home last week full of adventures abroad, but content with the land of her birth.

These adventures were mostly staged in a motion picture studio where Miss Mersereau was playing the part of the fair-haired Christian girl in the great spectacular film drama "Nero" J. Gordon Edwards is making for the Fox Film Company. Accompanied by her mother and her sister Claire, Miss Violet sailed for Italy last July and has been there ever since with the exception of the few weeks she spent in Germany and Switzerland.

Over the luncheon table Miss Mersereau told of her experiences abroad, many of them amusing, and all of them interesting.

"Making pictures in Rome," she said, "has some advantages and many disadvantages. The climate is perfect, and the studios are fair, but none of them have the perfect equipment that make our American studios such a joy.

"I might give as one of the greatest disadvantages my scenes with the players who spoke only Italian or French. I was the only American in the cast, and I found it somewhat disconcerting at times to have the director tell me to look tenderly at the leading man while I listened to his earnest protestations of love--disconcerting, I mean, when he would pour a perfect volley of Italian at me. I could not understand a word he was trying to say, and when I answered his passionate declarations in English he looked just as mystified. I felt sorry for him. He seemed to think I was discussing everything but my film affection.

"I think I was a little disappointed in the Italian men," confessed Miss Violet. "I had thought all Romans must be tall and handsome and like greek Gods. I found the Italian men small, very timid and not at all like I had

pictured them. Their spaghetti eating amazed me, and after seeing yards of this food crammed down their mouths I decided I never wanted to see or eat it again."

"Tell about the lions," prompted Sister Claire, who had joined us at the luncheon.

"The Italian climate is so balmy it affects even the beasts," went on Miss Violet. "The lions engaged to devour the Christians were so weary and so bored Mr. Edwards said it would be easier to pet them than to fear them. When my mother saw how harmless these gorgeous beasts of the jungle appeared she heaved a great sigh of relief, for she had expected to see me eaten alive before her very eyes. Just when we were all feeling the cruelty of the beast of the jungle had been greatly exaggerated Mr. Edwards said we will go to Germany and get some real lions."

"Oh, those terrible, terrible beasts," interrupted Claire.

Yes, they were terrible, shivered Violet. "The leading man took one look at the jowls of the lion which was supposed to feed on him and he said, 'you must get a substitute.'

"Mr. Edwards," went on Miss Mersereau, "was very much upset. He had brought all this company to Cologne just to get the lions, and here was the leading man ready to leave us.

"You won't desert me, will you, Violet?"

"I told him no and laid me down to die. The leading man seeing me about to be put into the jaws of the lions thought he could do no more than die with me. We laid down and the lion saw us and made one dash. For the rehearsal we were separated from his majesty by a thin piece of glass. He broke the glass and made a dive for his victims. I was so terrified I took to my heels and ran out of the picture. There was a trainer near by with a gun, but the sight of that great beast licking his chops was enough to frighten any one. But we returned to the scene and let the camera catch us with the lions about to devour us. I was so glad when it was over I wanted to cry for joy."

Miss Mersereau had one regret. She longed to go to Paris and shop on

the Rue de Paix.

"I needed clothes so badly," she said.

"That frock is charming," I told her.

"Oh, this is a Parisian product," she said, pointing to her gray velvet frock, with its hat and boots to match. "A purchase made in Italy but imported to Rome.

"We enjoyed Switzerland and Germany, but we felt we missed a great deal by not getting to Paris and London. I have not been in France since I was a little girl, and there is so much I want to see--not only the shops, but the galleries and the places of historical interest."

"But you enjoyed Italy?" I asked her.

"I enjoyed most of all working for Mr. Edwards. It was one of my happiest engagements. He doesn't rehearse you until you are ready to faint from fatigue. He gives you credit for a little intelligence, and after explaining the scene and the mechanics gives you an opportunity to play the situation in your own way. I firmly believe," went on Miss Violet, "first emotions are best, and by that token I can act a scene better when I do it as it comes to me first."

"He let you do it your way," Miss Violet was told "because he knows you have had experience on the stage and screen and could interpret the scenes without a primer of instruction."

"I suppose there is something to that," replied Miss Mersereau.

"I have been on the stage since I was eight and in pictures since I was twelve. One would have to be very stupid not to learn something of the technique of the drama in that length of time."

"Do you think you will return to Italy?"

"Violet had several offers to make pictures for Italian companies," answered her sister, "but she wanted to get home."

"Yes, and this ought to be our very happiest Christmas," said Violet.

"Mr. Edwards said he could use me in other foreign pictures and I suppose I might have waited until he was ready for me, but I longed to hang my stocking up in New York, all I could think of was getting home by December 25."

Miss Mersereau can go to Italy any time she chooses if one is to believe what one hears. The swarthy Latin race admired her golden hair, violet eyes and fair complexion. To them she was the personification of all that is young and beautiful, and the artistic Italians love beauty and worship it above everything else. But we are glad she decided to come home for Christmas because we agree with her the best place to greet the mistletoe and holly season is right in the U. S. A.

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Alma Rubens

December 14, 1919

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Locating a face you have only seen on the screen is not as simple as it sounds. Alma Rubens in her street clothes is not like Alma Rubens in peasant costume or Alma Rubens in a white frock and sash. Unconsciously the girl I had mentally mirrored in my mind fitted in with this latter classification, hence we passed each other by without a sign of recognition.

We were both fifteen minutes late, a feminine failing this time of the year, with Christmas shopping to be finished in odd moments. She looked frantically in every nook and cranny in the Commodore mezzanine and I did the same. After we had passed each other about twenty times I decided the only solution was to have her paged. The same idea must have come to her at exactly the same moment for our two names were shouted through the hotel corridors simultaneously.

And we met, introduced by a page boy.

After Miss Rubens removed her heavy fur coat with its huge collar shading her face I wondered I had not instantly recognized her. Off the screen there is, of course, that same Oriental type of beauty, dusky eyes and dark straight hair. Her coloring the screen fails to get.

Alma Rubens is one of the girls whom David Griffith chose for a picture,

and by his selection gave her an entree into motion pictures. Mr. Griffith's choice of film material is always distinctive and every girl whom he casts in a picture is given opportunities to make good. Some of these young women have justified the Griffith confidence in their beauty and talent, others have not lived up to his diagnosis.

Alma Rubens in herself has justified the Griffith selection, but her vehicles have not always been so fortunate. The shortcomings of the Rubens pictures have in the past been not in any fault of acting but frequently in the story, its structure and its theme.

Those days of anguish now Miss Rubens believes are in the past. She is to have congenial stories and no plays which are distasteful. Her first, "Humoresque," is a Fanny Hurst story picturing a girl whom Miss Rubens says she knows and understands. International, for whom she is to make the Cosmopolitan brand of pictures, believes in an actress's own intuition where film plays are concerned, and Miss Rubens is banking on this privilege of exerting her intuition to the utmost.

"It's pleasant to be allowed to have a word in the selection of the plays I am to interpret. But I have been so frightened at the 'temperamental' reputation I have in the industry I let this suggestion come from International. I have been called the most difficult actress in pictures, when all I ask or have ever asked is to have stories suited to me. That isn't much to demand, now is it?"

Temperament is the most used and misused word in the dictionary. It covers a multitude of other sins and frequently is used where it does not belong. Therefore, when Miss Rubens first said she had been accused of being temperamental I felt her own interpretation was needed. Some actresses feel it is a personal slight if you fail to agree with the world and do not call them temperamental, while to others it is the nastiest word in the lexicon of characteristics.

To the latter class belongs Alma Rubens, and her genuine anxiety at clearing herself of this stigma would have been amusing had she been less in earnest.

She has had a year of changes. Since leaving Triangle, the company with whom she has spent the most of her motion picture career, she has had several contracts, but they were of brief duration, caused, she said, by a multitude of reasons.

Miss Rubens is a convent-bred girl, having graduated from the Mesdames of the Sacred Heart in San Francisco, and she admits her fondness for children and for lending a helping hand was instilled in her by the gentle sisters who taught her to not only preach but practice charity.

"Those lessons cling to me," she said, "despite the disillusionments of the world outside a convent wall. For instance, I spend \$100 a week sending photographs to the fans. I don't mind the money and I am glad to send my picture to any one who is sincere in wanting it--but I wish some one could have that money who needs it. I wonder if I couldn't sell my pictures through some orphanage and let this institution have the revenue?

"Will you help me find such a place?" she asked.

Miss Rubens's idea may be a brilliant gem. If all the stars sold their pictures in this way what a harvest these homes would make. And most of the people who write could afford 25 cents. They spend many times that in postage and stationary telling the world how much they love Mary Pickford or why Charlie Chaplin's feet are the funniest in captivity.

The rest of our conversation was a discussion of this and those who compose the letter-writing world. We decided these folk who send letters to actresses are in a class by themselves and have a hobby just the same as any postage stamp collector.

Being discovered by David Griffith and remaining on the screen in spite of an army of discouragements isn't sufficient for Miss Rubens. She has the stage hankering in an exaggerated form and it is our experience when a young woman of Alma Rubens's comeliness wants a thing bad enough she gets it. She admitted she had been given a play by a stage producer to read and if she liked it and he liked her in the part she might spread her wings stageward.

"But I want to do a serious part. As much as I wish to go on the stage I will not accept a play or a part until I know I can do the sort of thing I

am best fitted to play. I couldn't play light comedy. I would be a dismal failure, and as for bedroom farces I would get my notice at the end of the first week."

We shall see what we shall see when Miss Alma does take that stage plunge, meanwhile she is enthusiastic over an opportunity to put Fanny Hurst on the screen or perhaps we should say over Fanny Hurst's opportunity to put her in pictures. It seems a mutual delight, and when two women of brains set their mind to the accomplishment of a deed no more need be said, especially when they have International back of them.

And next time we meet Miss Rubens promises to know me and I am sure unless she wears a mask I shall know her. No one could miss her eyes. They are a combination of what Tennyson could have beautifully described and of what the twentieth century scribe would call a "come hither look."

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Gloria Swanson

April 16, 1922
Louella Parsons
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

If any one pictures Gloria Swanson as a blase young woman, bored with everything life has to offer, he has only to hear her on the subject of going to Europe. She is as pleased as a youngster at his first circus, and as thrilled as any girl in the world would be at an opportunity of getting her first glimpse of Paris.

I had not expected to see Gloria this trip. She was only in town from Wednesday until Saturday, but an unexpected meeting at the Famous Players-Lasky offices presented a chance to talk to her, and hear something of her plans for Europe.

"The one sad thing," Gloria confessed, "is leaving the baby for two months. Mr. Somborn has her with her nurse at his hotel. I thought it was a fair thing to do, but when I think how she will grow and how she will forget

me in that time, I have a feeling I may be homesick.

"We better not talk about that," she said. "I suppose all mothers feel that way. She is such a gorgeous baby, so pretty and so responsive."

"Where are you going and what are your plans?" an interruption that brought the proud mother of the most beautiful baby in the world back to the subject at hand.

"Seven days in Paris, four in London, two in Monte Carlo, two in Naples, one day in Florence and Venice, and four days in Berlin," answered Miss Swanson. "You see," she laughed, "I have our itinerary all down to a system. It's my very first visit to Europe and I do not want to miss a single thing. I am so thrilled I can hardly sleep at night."

"I shall probably travel around with a Baedeker in one hand and a sandwich in the other because I want to see Versailles, Malmaison, Westminster Abbey, the Louvre, the London Tower and all those historical places of interest I have read so much about, and I shall try to get in the races at London and the Grand Prix at Paris, and of course the Casino at Monte Carlo."

Shopping will be part of the program. Miss Swanson sailed yesterday morning on the Homeric with Mrs. Frank Urson, wife of Marshall Neilan's assistant director, and the two girls were planning where to shop in Paris, and how many Paris frocks they would bring home.

"One person tells me to shop one place and another says, 'Oh, I wouldn't go there, you will not find any exclusive styles,' so I have decided," said Gloria, "to select my own shop, and do a little reconnoitering on my own hook."

"You would," I said, and we both laughed. Gloria, the ambitious youngster who used to park her belongings outside my office door at the Essanay Film offices, when she was trying her wings in motion pictures for the first time, is not very different from the star of today. The young woman with everything at her feet. She is a little sadder, a little older, and has, of course, acquired more dignity and poise. But there is the same eagerness to learn and the same ambition to get to the tip top, and to leave

no stone unturned to make her dreams come true.

"I like New York," she said, looking out of the window down the crowded Fifth Avenue street. "I like all the busy people, and all the signs of energy and life. I get tired of California. There isn't much out there but work and home, no theatres and no scenes of activity like that. Of course I suppose if I lived here I should feel I have the two big things, my work and my child--that is all any one can ask for. We all have our disappointments, and mine are no more bitter than other peoples, only things do not always turn out as one expects."

"But you have been very lucky?"

"In some ways," she answered.

Miss Swanson said all the girls who met her asked about Rudolph Valentino.

"He played opposite me in my last picture, 'The Gilded Cage' [Beyond the Rocks], and if these questions concerning him are any criterion or indication of his popularity, they will all rush to see him when the picture is released. They asked me how he makes love and a few more equally interesting questions. I suppose 'The Sheik' had something to do with this interest."

Gloria looked very well in a mink coat, a grey frock with hat and shoes to match, and some curious amber earrings and necklace. She always has the air of being perfectly groomed, and only in the Cecil De Mille pictures does she affect bizarre costumes and unusual hair dressing. She is and always was one of the best dressed women off the screen, which is saying something. Many a star might qualify for that distinction on the screen but not many in their regular street garb.

As Gloria rushed to join her friends I could not help thinking Paris would not have anything on the Rue de la Paix any better gowned or smarter than Gloria.

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Blanche Sweet

December 29, 1918

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Just now Blanche Sweet is facing a very interesting moment in her career as a motion picture star. After having deliberately stepped out of the public eye, where she was reigning as one of the most popular stars in motion pictures, into private life, Miss Sweet is about to return to her former pedestal and take back her place in the affection of the public.

How will she be received? Will the historical fickleness of the American audiences manifest itself, or will the love they have had for Blanche Sweet through all the years of her reign still predominate? Ah! here is a psychological question worth studying for future use? This was the thought I had in my mind when I went to the Knickerbocker Hotel to have luncheon with Miss Sweet. I had talked with her over the phone, but I had not had a glimpse of her for some months.

After she greeted me and we walked into the dining room and were seated, I wondered how I could have ever given the fickleness of the public a thought. A dozen heads were turned in our direction, and full the same number of voices whispered in accents of interest: "Blanche Sweet."

Blanche Sweet, to be sure, is as pretty a blonde and as well poised and charming as ever. Looking better than she looked in the days when the exhibitors fell all over each other to book her pictures, when she and Cecil De Mille were a combination of acknowledged strength.

Another argument that Blanche Sweet still retains her hold on the affections of the motion picture audiences is the number of letters she has received since she made her last picture two years ago. We who snoop into the private affairs of these film stars have also been deluged with questions as to when and where Blanche Sweet would play a return engagements.

She had made her two pictures, "The Hushed Hour" and "The Unpardonable Sin," and will be seen in both of these in Los Angeles in January. Just when they will be released outside of the motion picture city depends, we suppose, upon how they are distributed and by whom.

To return to our luncheon. Miss Sweet was leaving that very night for the Coast. She was going to speed across the country to get back West in time to eat Christmas turkey. We talked of the shortage of good material, and the great difficulty that every star experiences in getting the right sort of scenarios.

"The novelists and playwrights have boosted the price of every popular book and play so high, one has to hesitate before one can even consider buying them. I am too good a business woman," said Miss Sweet, "to pay \$40,000 for a play without having given what the cost of production will be some consideration. Forty thousand dollars without anything but the scenario is a lot of money."

We agree that \$40,000 was so much we never expected to see that amount either in cash or on a check. We hoped we would never be tempted with that amount, for the scales which old dame Justice spends her life trying to balance would have a terrific jolt.

"I am confident," went on Miss Sweet, "that the story is the thing, but it is going to be a problem to get it. For instance, I thought Miss Pickford's purchase of 'Daddy Long-Legs' and 'Pollyanna' was a wise stroke of showmanship. She had the good sense to see that no star is big enough to carry a picture alone."

We chatted about the Coast and the stars, all of whom are working there. We gossiped a bit, though Blanche Sweet never seems to really gossip, for she never has anything but cheerful, pleasant things to say of her fellow workers. This trait in Miss Sweet is one of the things which attracted me toward her when I first met her a few years ago. She seems to have the happy faculty of always seeing things through rose colored glasses, of finding some gold among the dross.

She spoke of the artistry of Charlie Chaplin, and how remarkable she thought it was that he had never yet recorded a failure in any of his productions. We spoke, of course, of Charlie's marriage, and Miss Sweet said when Mr. Chaplin did announce it they all refused to believe him.

"We thought it was one of Charlie's pranks," she said.

While we were having luncheon the discussion of proper publicity came up and Miss Sweet expressed her strong disapproval of the way the average picture is put on the market.

"It annoys me," she said, "to have them advertise in big letters that my picture is the greatest one ever made. Besides being in bad taste it strikes me as a mistake for any company to make such a statement. I was speechless when I read that I was supposed to say all of those complimentary things about 'The Unpardonable Sin.' Why, I have had the most wonderful cooperation from the entire company, including the cast, the director, the cameraman, every one who had a part in making my picture, and they haven't even been mentioned."

"But you do think 'The Unpardonable Sin' is a good picture, don't you?"

"I think it is wonderful. It is Marshall Neilan at his best, and I feel I have never done better work--but see here," she said, looking at me suspiciously, "you aren't going to publish that?--I am telling you because we are friends."

I am going back on Miss Sweet, however, and I am publishing it, because I believe it is a good thing for her admirers to know she really believes in the picture and feels she has a worthy vehicle to come back to her friends.

As for advertising the fact she likes the picture, even that doesn't seem as flagrant a breach of good taste as she says, for if the world didn't have a chance to read of the merits of the picture, the exhibitors, the audiences and even the other manufacturers might never know all of these things about the production.

Blanche Sweet is blessed with the rare combination of having an artistic mind and an excellent business judgment. I remember her telling me one time she had never yet made an error in her bank account. She said she knew to a penny just how much she had in her account and how much she spent.

"In fact," she said, laughing, "I should have been a bookkeeper. Sometimes I think my brain was meant for bookkeeping and my soul for pictures."

All of this greatly impressed me, for my mathematics is so wobbly, when

the little girl who lives at our house comes to me for help, I immediately seek some way to escape. I have to trust my bank implicitly, for if they told me I didn't have a penny left I should probably take their word for it, and you can readily see what a dishonest bank could do to such an unmathematical person.

P. S.--I hope my banker doesn't read this.

I left Miss Sweet hurrying to keep a business engagement before she set sail on the Golden Limited. The last glimpse I had of her she was waving her hand smilingly, and again I said to myself:

"Yes, Blanche Sweet will come back, and the dear public will forget for once to be disagreeable and fickle, for she has a charm about her, an elusive something that two years' absence will not make you or me forget."

* * * * *

Alice Terry

February 18, 1923

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Wherever Alice Terry dined, wherever she lunched or spent the evening she was received with the open-eyed admiration of our Manhattan, who, like Paris, can forgive a woman anything but ugliness. But Manhattan, in addition to loathing plainness in women, strikes such a high average of feminine beauty a woman has to be a combination of Helen of Troy and Cleopatra to get more than the flicker of an eyelash.

So when every man in the Knickerbocker grill gazed with admiring eyes on Alice Terry I realized, if I needed anything further to convince me, that the wife of Rex Ingram is a very beautiful woman. But it was not this beauty that gave her a chance to play the leading feminine role in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." It was Rex Ingram's confidence in her ability. He had known her for some years when he brought her the offer to play Margaret in Ibanez's story.

"I cannot do it," she told him.

"Don't you like the part?" he asked.

"I love it, but I haven't had sufficient experience to play in a picture of the importance of 'The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse'."

And after Mr. Ingram had persuaded her to let him cast her, she worried for fear she might spoil the picture for him.

The slim, blonde girl, who, with Rodolph Valentino, came in for world-wide praise, was made in that picture. Rex Ingram was right: the role was meant for her. Because Ibanez described Margaret as a blonde, Mr. Ingram, eager to follow the book as far as possible, insisted that Miss Terry cover her auburn locks and become a blonde. The effect was marvelous, so marvelous that she has never made a picture without the wig.

People meeting her for the first time take one look at her auburn hair and look surprised.

"Miss Terry!" they repeat, and, if they are impulsive and given to talking too much, they will say: "But your hair!"

The complications, she says, of being a blonde on the screen and a brunette on the street are many, but now that her public is used to seeing her look like Margaret she has no intention of disappointing them.

Just before Miss Terry went to the Coast she was called upon to make a momentous decision--whether to sign a contract with Metro and remain a Rex Ingram star or to go with another company where she would have to paddle her own canoe.

"Mr. Loew is such a good boss," she said, "and I love working with my husband, but sometimes I feel it would be better for us both. Rex feels he must not play me up too much in any of his pictures, because people will say that he pushed his wife forward, and I would like to see what I can do without help.

"Of course," said Miss Terry earnestly, "if Rex had any objection to my leaving Metro I wouldn't consider the other offer. But he is perfectly willing to have me do what I want in the matter. I haven't reached any decision yet, but the company that made me the offer is one of the largest

ones in the business. Naturally Rex would not permit me to talk business with any other kind."

If Miss Terry does sign the other contract she will make "Scaramouche" for Metro first. She says she loves the story and she is eager to play the woman's part. While she was in New York she had an offer to play "Scaramouche" on the stage with Sidney Blackmar.

"Why didn't you accept the offer?" she was asked.

"I should have died of fright. I know I could never go on the stage," she said. "I was cast for a part in a tableau on the stage in California, and if I had had anything to say I would have passed away then and there."

The Ingrams returned to the Coast a week ago. Mrs. Ingram was not very eager to get back to sunny California. In New York she managed to get in the theatres, some parties and a good time.

"In California," she said, "we never go anywhere. Rex studies all the time. He no more than finishes one picture than he starts planning sets and reading books for his next. I do not care to go without him, so we stay home on an average of seven nights a week. I like to stay at home, of course, but I do enjoy going out once in a while." So you see being the wife of a great director has its drawbacks.

A sentiment that is honest and natural you will admit when it comes from a young woman not yet 23, who has been given more than her share of good looks and charm.

But life for Alice Terry is not all dancing, attending the theatre and buying gowns. She is genuinely interested in her husband's work and watches with eager eyes every picture he creates. "However, Rex and I do not always agree on his picture," she said, laughing. "His favorite is 'Trifling Women' and mine is 'The Conquering Power.'"

We are usually neutral in all matters that concern a husband and wife, but in this case we agree with Miss Terry. We like "Trifling Women" the least of anything Rex Ingram has ever made, and so we told her as we parted on the corner of Forty-Second Street and Broadway.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about

Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 64 -- April 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROROLOGY?

TAYLOROROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Mabel Normand and "Goldwyn"

We finally got around to reading GOLDWYN, by A. Scott Berg. It's a very nice book, but there is a major omission regarding the initial founding of Goldwyn Pictures.

Samuel Goldfish was forced out of Famous Players-Lasky on September 14, 1916. Goldwyn Pictures was incorporated two months later on November 19, 1916. That was in Berg's book. But why would the Selwyns agree to Goldfish's plan and join with him to create Goldwyn Pictures? Goldfish needed the Selwyns, with their reputation and library of filmable plays; but why did the Selwyns need Goldfish? What did Goldfish have that the Selwyns couldn't get elsewhere?

The primary answer: Mabel Normand.

On September 16, 1916, two days after resigning from Famous Players-Lasky, Sam Goldfish signed Mabel Normand to a personal contract, to take effect after her current contract with Sennett would expire in 1917. A few months earlier, MOTION PICTURE MAGAZINE had a readers' poll and Mabel Normand was voted the favorite female comedian, with nearly two million votes. So at the time Goldfish was negotiating with the Selwyns, he had Mabel Normand's contract in his pocket; he had the top female comedy star, and if the Selwyns wanted her they would have to do business with him. Indeed, given the circumstances described in Berg's book surrounding the formation of Goldwyn Pictures, it seems unlikely that Goldfish would have been able to convince the Selwyns, had he not had Mabel Normand under contract. (See NEW YORK TELEGRAPH, July 8, 1917, reprinted in MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS, p. 56.)

So Mabel Normand was not only the most successful star of Goldwyn Pictures, she was a major impetus for its very existence.

Another Taylor Film on Home Video?

The 1917 film "A Tale of Two Cities," starring William Farnum, is available on home video from Critics' Choice. Taylor seems to have had something to do with this film, based on the following:

1. In several contemporary motion picture directories and items of

personal publicity, it was stated that Taylor had either directed this film, or acted in it.

2. Taylor joined Fox in December 1916, and was there when "A Tale of Two Cities" was being filmed.

3. The film had a "cast of thousands" and likely utilized almost everyone on the Fox lot at the time.

On the other hand: Taylor was not in the cast listing; the "director of record" was Frank Lloyd; and the star William Farnum stated that he had never worked with Taylor.

Without firm proof, the following are some possibilities:

1. Perhaps Taylor did some work on the film as a second unit director, to help with the big crowd scenes, or to direct some minor scenes while Frank Lloyd was directing the star.

2. Perhaps Taylor acted in a small uncredited role.

3. Perhaps Frank Lloyd was ill for a few days, and Taylor took over temporarily.

The exact answer will probably never be known. But "A Tale of Two Cities," made while Taylor was on the Fox lot, probably contains a little of his work.

In Print: "The Big Book of Scandal!"

THE BIG BOOK OF SCANDAL! (Paradox Press, 1997) is a 191-page large paperback covering the major American scandals of the past century. Written by Jonathan Vankin and illustrated in a wide variety of comic book styles by "over 50 of the world's top artists," the book includes "Death of a Mystery Man," a four-page recap of the Taylor case illustrated by Alan Weiss. For a short, sensationalized recap of the case, it is fairly good--although, as would be expected, some rumors are stated as fact. The only major error in the recap was the path and distance of the fatal shot. The book's bibliography indicates that Vankin utilized three issues of TAYLOROLOGY

(issues 15, 19, and 50) in addition to HOLLYWOOD BABYLON and the books by Kirkpatrick and Giroux. This is the first time we have seen electronic TAYLOROLOGY cited as a bibliographic source in print. Thanks Jonathan!

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Five

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the fifth day after Taylor's body was discovered.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

Wallace Smith

DENVER POST

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...More and more the eyes of the detectives are turned to the haunts of the Hollywood drug peddlers, the smugglers of forbidden "dope" who cater to the depravities of the wild movie set. More and more they feel certain that sooner or later the secret of the shooting must come, directly or indirectly, from the dens of these human birds of prey.

It was this theory that led to the apprehension of the three men rounded up last night as suspects. They were directed in their search for the trio by a mysterious, anonymous informant. One of the trio was an actor once employed by Taylor. He had given up the rather unprofitable business of the stage for bootlegging, and later gave this up for the infinitely more simple and profitable peddling of drugs.

After Mrs. Douglas MacLean, wife of the picture star, had failed to identify either of the three as the man she asserts she saw leaving Taylor's home about the time of the murder and after they had supplied likely alibis, they were released.

Make no mistake about the open handed operations of the drug ring in the wilds of Hollywood. It sounds melodramatic and perhaps smacks of an attempt at sensationalism. Regardless of sound or smack, it is an ever present and ever growing menace, almost unbelievable in the boldness with which it is carried on.

One of the present theories of the police is that Taylor, alias William Deane-Tanner, the man of the double life and friend of many women, was receiving the "dope" for one of his feminine acquaintances. It was rather definitely reported that she was a star whose friends had sought to keep her favorite "dope," morphine, away from her and that she had found in Taylor a willing agent.

One of her admirers, it was theorized, learning that Taylor had been secretly holding the young woman a slave to the drug--and perhaps to his fancies--confronted him with the fact and killed him.

The actual developments in the past few hours of the sensational case were:

The frantic search for letters written by Mabel Normand, with Taylor an hour before he was slain, to the director--letters which have disappeared from the bureau drawer in which he secreted them.

The disappearance of a dainty, peach colored silk nightgown, frilled with lace, and said to bear the monogram of one of the leading stars of the profession. One report placed this in the possession of an investigator who was said to have a private use for it, another said that it had been recovered by some agent of the star.

The discovery of other letters from other stars--including the notes of Blanche Sweet and Gloria Swanson; friendly little notes--among the private papers of the slain director.

The fact that a rich ne-er-do-well of Los Angeles, a man of wealth and influence and an unsavory reputation, was being kept under surveillance by the detectives.

The suspicion that a man recently risen to fame in the screen world, inspired by mad jealousy, had killed the director. He, too, was to be asked

to account for his whereabouts the night of the slaying.

In all their huntings and scurrying around the detectives did not for a moment lose sight of their theory that the killer may have been a blackmailer, who shot his victim when the payer of tribute finally turned and defied him. This, in consideration of Taylor's tangled past and his numerous affairs with women, still seemed the most likely theory...

The search for the peach-hued "nighties" promised to become interesting. With blackmail already in the air, the owner of the garment might feel a bit apprehensive about having it fall into the hands of one who might find in it a weapon for levying tribute.

That it had disappeared was revealed after Peavey, the house man, had spoken of putting it carefully away a few nights before his employer was slain.

That it had been in Taylor's possession, at all, gave new color to the stories of the affairs with women conducted by the man who was known to his friends as "a man's man," and one who "always played a lone hand."

These same friends, surprised as they were by the news that Taylor had been married, was a father and a wife-deserter, have with stubborn regard for the ethics of friendship, refused to discuss the private affairs of the man who is dead.

Which may be fine for the ethics of friendship, but which is making it rather difficult for the police, who are seeking the friend's slayer.

It is also giving rise to rumors about the abuse of strength being manifested by the moving picture interests in "hushing up" all tales which might in some way reflect on the actors and actresses--even those whose dissipations are notorious and matters of every-day gossip. It has even been hinted that if there is any money to be raised it will not be for the purpose of finding the man who killed Taylor, but for the purpose of "hushing up" those who might assist in capturing the assassin.

Meanwhile, the mad "parties" in Hollywood continue. Some of the wilder ones may be a little quiet for a week, or so, but only rarely, they learned, is there any telling investigation. And so they will be at it again...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

DENVER POST

...Mrs. Theodore Brown, of the Brown-Byers studio, knew William Desmond Taylor very well about six years ago in Los Angeles.

"Billy Taylor was one of the finest men I ever met," Mrs. Brown said Monday. "He used to come to our house and call on Neva Gerber, a motion picture actress who was staying with us, and who now lives at 217 North Western avenue, Los Angeles. He and Miss Gerber were engaged to be married, but about two years ago they decided not to go on with their engagement..."

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

Jealous Suitor Seen as Hand on Death Gun

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--The little green-eyed monster, jealousy, police and private detectives say, has directed search for a prominent young New Yorker, formerly engaged to one of the beautiful stars of filmdom, in connection with the mystery murder last Wednesday night of William Desmond Taylor, widely known motion picture director, known in New York prior to 1908 as William Cunningham Deane-Tanner, art connoisseur.

For sustained interest and thrilling denouement after denouement, the case continues to project itself farther and farther above any film mystery which the genius of the director ever developed for the theatergoer. Letters written by Mabel Normand to Taylor, reported missing following the murder, and evidence concerning presence for six months at least of a woman's silk pink nightgown, embroidered with a screen star's initials, in the luxuriously appointed bachelor apartment, and its disappearance after the slaying, add

considerable interest to the case.

The New Yorker suspected in connection with the murder is reported to have checked out of a hotel there on the day of the murder and to have left the city the following afternoon. He is believed by investigators to have headed for San Diego and possibly crossed the border into Mexico. His name is withheld by police.

The actress to whom this suspect was once engaged, according to investigators, was a close friend to Taylor and in this friendship a possible motive of jealousy which would lead to murder is seen.

The probe daily goes deeper and deeper into the motion picture colony here, and the great list of names of actresses and actors, as well as managers and employees, being questioned by the police begins to read like a list of those present at a great "movie" ball.

One of the tangles in the Hollywood skein, police say, concerns a widely-known actress and a man said to be enamored of her. This actress, they say, was frank in expressing admiration of Taylor, and it is known he saw much of her. Here, police say, is one possible clew to the "jealousy" theory. They say, however, that while extremely anxious to question the man, they find it a delicate matter, owing to the resources and friends he possesses...

With the tales came to the police of the alleged possession by Taylor of women's silken lingerie, one piece of which, a pink nightrobe, is reported missing from his apartments since his body was discovered. One witness is said to have stated, but not to the police, that this robe bore the embroidered initials of a motion picture actress.

Close upon the heels of these declarations came the report that the police were searching for a drug peddler, who, it is pointed out, had sought through Taylor to make deliver of drugs to an actress, who found it difficult to make her purchases direct. The initials of the actress connected with this phase of the case were said to be the same as those on the night robe reported missing from the Taylor apartments.

Police are looking for the silk nightgown, Captain of Detectives David L. Adams said.

"We have never seen it," he said. "We have had a lot of reports about it, and if it existed it has disappeared. We have had no definite reports that it belonged to any actress or woman. We do not know that it had any initials upon it, or other marks of identification, but we are going to look for it."

After the announcement of the search for the drug peddler, deputy sheriffs left for an unnamed destination on what they termed the "most definite clew thus far discovered in the Taylor murder mystery." They said they were going to interview "a certain party" and possibly make an arrest.

This was the first active participation of the sheriff's forces in the case.

Miss Mabel Normand, the motion picture actress, who was with Taylor shortly before he was shot and killed in his home here last Wednesday evening, Sunday stated that a package of letters written by her to Taylor at different times was missing from his home. Miss Normand said the letters were there a few weeks ago.

The letters, she said, were friendly in tone and there was "nothing in them to be ashamed of," but she was unable to account for their disappearance.

The detectives placed much weight on this development, saying it was the first real sign of an indication pointing to a possible motive for the shooting.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

...The shot that killed William Desmond Taylor was fired from a distance of only three or four inches.

This startling discovery in the murder mystery was announced following a conference at police headquarters today between the officers investigating the crime.

It was revealed when Detective Sergeant Edward King, detailed to duty at the district attorney's office, brought to the conference the clothing of the murdered movie director.

Powder burns on the tan gabardine coat indicated that the revolver was held by the assassin almost against Taylor's body.

Experiments in the police shooting gallery, where shots were fired at a similar piece of cloth from varying distances, confirmed the surmise that the muzzle of the revolver could not have been more than 4 inches from Taylor's coat when the fatal shot was fired.

This discovery leads to two speculations.

Number One: (Which is not considered seriously by the police,) is that Taylor killed himself. But no weapon was found by the body. The only conclusion reconcilable with this hypothesis is that the body was discovered by a burglar, who had entered the apartment and who was frightened away after picking up the revolver.

Number Two: Taylor might have engaged in a desperate struggle with his assassin before he was killed, and that they were at death grips when the murderer pulled out his weapon and fired.

This speculation is born out by the overturned chair found across the dead man's feet. But nothing else in the room had been disturbed however.

If Taylor saw his slayer and grappled with him, it is believed that he must have recognized him as an enemy. This belief leads to the abandonment of the burglar theory and the concentration of every effort upon finding an ancient enemy of the murdered picture director--some one perhaps who knew him in the old days in New York, before he changed his name from Tanner to Taylor.

...Today's activities by the police followed a night of fruitless endeavor to solve the murder mystery by detectives and deputy sheriffs, outstanding in the night's work was the detention and grilling of two well-known movie actors.

In overcoat and muffler, with a cap pulled down over his forehead, George Milo, picture actor, strode up and down the sidewalk last night in

front of 404-B South Alvarado street, the bungalow home of Taylor.

He was enacting, against his will, a role he had often played for profit in the films--that of a "genteel heavy." Eyes unseen by him looked out from the shuttered windows of the bungalow across the court from Taylor's. Mrs. Douglas MacLean, wife of the movie star, was comparing Milo with the man she saw leaving the bungalow where Taylor was murdered.

Meanwhile, in a closed automobile, parked a short distance away deputy sheriffs were firing questions at Henri Reineque, actor and friend of Milo. The questions concerned his whereabouts and that of the other film actor last Wednesday night.

Milo and Reineque were taken into custody at 8 o'clock last night as they were alighting from Milo's automobile in front of the Lobban apartments, 1030 West Eighth street, where both live.

Al Manning, chief deputy in charge of criminal investigations at the sheriff's office, drove to the Lobban with Deputy Sheriff Harvey Bell. They had traced Milo's automobile after a mysterious telephone message had been received at the sheriff's office to the effect that a Maxwell sedan with a certain number stood in front of Taylor's home the night of the murder.

The number given by the anonymous informant was that of Milo's closed Maxwell.

"The boss wants to see you," explained Manning, accosting the men.

"Who's the boss?" asked one.

"The sheriff," replied Bell.

The two actors made no protest as they were escorted to the sheriff's automobile and taken to the office. Here they were separated and both subjected to a severe grilling on the question of their whereabouts Wednesday night.

Milo at first seemed worried by the questions.

"You were a close acquaintance of Mabel Normand, weren't you?" demanded one of the five or six deputies who surrounded him with a circle of accusing eyes.

"No," replied Milo. "I worked with her in 'The Slim Princess.'" Aside

from that I know nothing about her."

One of the deputies later ran up and shook an accusing finger in Milo's face.

"Don't you know you are suspected of murdering William Taylor?" he shouted at Milo.

The actor's face showed instant relief and he broke into a smile. Then he reached over and shook hands with his questioner.

"That's a good joke," he said. "You really had me frightened for a while. I didn't know what you wanted me for. But if that's it, why it's too ridiculous to do anything about except laugh."

The officers were not satisfied with this denial and bundled Milo into an automobile. He was taken to the South Alvarado street bungalow court, where he was dressed as the mysterious stranger was supposed to have been and made to promenade in front of the place.

Meanwhile Reineque was being subjected to an equally severe fire of questions.

"Where were you Wednesday night?" iterated all of his questioners in chorus.

"For heaven's sake! Give a man time to think," replied Reineque, scratching his head. He came from Alsace-Lorraine and speaks with a slight accent.

Finally, after Mrs. Douglas MacLean had failed to recognize Milo as the muffled stranger whom she saw leaving Taylor's house and after continued questioning had failed to elicit anything of importance from either of the movie actors, they were driven home by the deputy sheriffs and dismissed with apologies for the inconvenience caused them.

Both men were warned, however, that they were under surveillance and told not to leave town.

Police Captain Adams and Detectives Cline, Cahill and Cato were with the deputy sheriffs and assisted at the investigation last night.

Milo, a handsome chap of the movie leading man type, was still somewhat staggered by his experience of last night, when he was seen today. He was

able to summon a smile, however, at what he characterized as the "ridiculous charge that I killed Taylor."

His screen history in Los Angeles connects him as an actor with several prominent women stars with whom he has worked in various pictures. These include Pauline Frederick, Theda Bara, Clara Kimball Young, Ruth Roland and Mabel Normand. Milo today reiterated the statement he made to the officers that he only knew Miss Normand through working with her in one picture.

The actor is of French birth, but has spent most of his life in America. Besides being an actor, he is an athlete of prowess. He formerly toured in vaudeville with an acrobatic act, in which he was "understander" and also posed in a leopard skin to show his unusual muscular development.

...The disappearance of a frilly diaphanous article of feminine apparel, which Peavey said had reposed for months in a box in one of Taylor's dresser drawers, was another grain of mystery in the case today. The valet happened to remember about the missing garment and informed the police. It was in its usual place up to the night of the murder. Peavey said he did not know who the owner of the garment was or why Taylor kept it.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Mary Miles Minter Lays Rose on Dead Friend

...It was early Friday afternoon that Miss Minter came to view Desmond's body. She carried a dozen Black Prince roses intertwined with fern. As she saw the beloved form upon a couch she burst into tears and asked the friend who was with her to leave the room. The door closed behind him and for a few brief moments she was alone with Taylor.

When Ivy H. Overholtzer, funeral director, opened the door a little later she was standing bowed over the body, her tears falling upon the gray silk robe in which it was clothed.

Turning to the mantel upon which she had placed the roses she drew forth a single bud and laid it across Taylor's chest. Then, sobbing her grief, she left the room and was driven away in her car...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
Estelle Lawton Lindsey
LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

Denies Story of Love for Taylor

"On my word of honor, on my word of honor. Get it straight, please."

Mabel Normand emphasized that phrase all the time that she talked to me about William Desmond Taylor, the moving picture director who had been her friend and who was mysteriously murdered shortly after he had placed her in her auto Wednesday night.

Miss Normand, nervous and shaken, heavy-lidded from loss of sleep and the grueling inquisition to which she has been subjected since the murder, came into her delightful sitting-room this morning and talked freely of her friendship with the dead man, and the rumors that since his death have arisen about him.

"I was never in love with Mr. Taylor in the way one means when they use the expression 'in love.' If he was in love with me, he never told me.

"There was no thought or talk of marriage between us. Our friendship was based on comradeship and understanding. In many ways he was wonderful. I loved to go out with him because he understood so well when my work forced me to break engagements, and because we loved so many of the same things, books, music, pictures."

"Do you know any woman who might have been jealous of you, who might have loved Mr. Taylor?" I asked.

"On my word of honor, no," she cried, beating her tiny hands together.

"Or any man who might have been jealous of the place that he occupied in

your esteem?"

Again the emphatic denial and the movement of the slender hands.

"It has been hinted that he had dope parties," suggested another reporter. "Did you ever hear of them?"

"Never, in God's world, never, on my word of honor. Billy was one of the cleanest and most temperate men in all his habits. He was sick, and very careful of his diet. He loved clean, simple pleasures, and he was a kind and thoughtful friend.

"Flowers? Yes, he sent them to me three times a week. He knew that I loved flowers. And--yes, he telegraphed me often when I was in New York, but not every night. His telegrams were sometimes about things he wanted me to get for him in New York, sometimes just efforts to keep me posted about things here. I bought golf balls for him and he looked after the welfare of my dog and often wired me that it was well.

"And, oh, please, say that I never heard of that pink nightgown, and that I always went to Mr. Taylor's dinners with a crowd."

"Henry Peavey, the colored servant, said"--

"He ought to be ashamed to say that I asked him about other girls going to Mr. Taylor's house," Miss Normand burst out. "Henry ought to be grateful to me. I saved him his job when Mr. Taylor wanted to fire him. I begged that Billy wouldn't fire him on a rumor which might be false.

"And say this, please, on my word of honor, I never spoke to Henry in my life except in Mr. Taylor's presence, and can you imagine my asking before Billy about other girls? Henry has told an awful big story.

"I hope they find my letters because they are just little messages about everyday things. I never did go to the house to search for them. I only went to show the police how the furniture had been arranged.

"I can't imagine anybody wanting to kill Billy. He was the kindest, most patient and tactful man I ever knew. I never knew him to lose his temper and, no, I never saw him show fear."

And so the little star rattled on, begging, explaining, replying to all questions with the utmost frankness and detail.

"She's worn out, poor little thing," said A. McArthur, publicity manager for the Sennett studios. "She wants to help clear up this mystery, but she needs rest terribly. We can't take her out of town. If we do everybody will say she ran away, and nobody will let her rest in town; the telephone goes every minute and the doorbell, too.

"The poor kid lost a friend when Taylor died, but she knows nothing about why or how he died. You can bet on that."

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
LONG BEACH PRESS

Los Angeles--"Comb the dope dens of Hollywood!"

This terse order was issued today by Detective Captain David L. Adams, following a conference at police headquarters of all agencies working on the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery.

Although Adams would make no statement to the press, it was understood that a new clue had been received connecting the supposed slayer of the famed motion picture director with the operations of a well-organized Hollywood "snowball" ring.

Detective Sergeants Mailheau and Yarrow of the narcotics squad, immediately left Captain Adams' office to launch a rigid investigation of the alleged dope peddlers and their operations.

Captain Adams denied a newspaper report that the police were looking for a prominent Los Angeles man, formerly engaged to a film star. It was reported that this man had checked out of his hotel here on the day after the murder and crossed the border, presumably at Tiajuana.

"This report is erroneous," Adams said. "We've already traced the 'lead' and abandoned it."...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

...There was some friction in the police probe of the slaying today and it was reported that certain detectives had asked to be given other assignments rather than continue investigating the murder with asserted misunderstanding existing.

Several detectives were inclined to the theory that the person who slew Taylor may have been mentally unbalanced, and qualified their remarks regarding that phase of the probe by discussing confidential reports obtained today from the mystery witness who called at detective headquarters and who was said to have stated he saw Sands near the scene of the slaying late Wednesday night.

A clew regarding what became of the letters and telegrams said to have been in Taylor's dresser drawer, written by Mabel Normand, film actress and friend of the slain director, was given to the police today while the slaying was being investigated from the hour Taylor's dead body was found. Investigation was made of a report that after Taylor's death Miss Normand's letters were taken away by a visitor to the house.

Considerable time was devoted to reviewing the occurrences at Taylor's residence following the finding of the body by Henry Peavey, negro valet-cook. It was pointed out that when aid for Detective Sergeant Tom Zeigler reached the bungalow court, fully a half hour after the report was received that Taylor had presumably died of natural causes, the house was virtually filled with strangers to the detectives who may have disturbed important evidence.

The detectives who clung to the belief that Taylor was shot and killed in a "love triangle" by a vengeance-seeking lover, or by a hired assassin, continued to direct their investigation today into the realms of stardom and several of the leading actors and actresses were questioned regarding the slain director's recent activities, his intimates, his asserted affairs of the heart and the source from which he obtained select liquors.

Detectives Theodore Mailheu and Lloyd Yarrow, members of the police

narcotic squad, investigated reports that Taylor was a close friend of several film luminaries said to be addicted to the use of narcotics. Taylor was not a drug addict, say the police, but may have had knowledge of drug peddlers supplying the alleged addicts...

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
LOS ANGELES HERALD

Another interesting picture of the past life of the slain director was revealed today by Miss Neva Gerber, film actress, who was at one time engaged to marry Taylor.

Miss Gerber declared that she had seen Taylor wrapped in spells of utter despondency on many occasions and that on several of these period he had expressed a wish to "end it all."

She said that Taylor often complained of ill health, declaring that he could not eat anything, and that he was usually most despondent when he had just completed a picture upon which he had been working extremely hard.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
LONG BEACH TELEGRAM

Los Angeles--Added impetus in the search for Sands was given yesterday by Mrs. Douglas MacLean, wife of the screen actor, who occupies a bungalow adjoining the one in which Taylor was murdered, exclaimed upon being shown a picture of Sands:

"He looks very much like the man I saw leaving Taylor's house the night of the murder."...

Throughout the unceasing investigation of the baffling case detectives are advancing on the theory that some place in the solution of the mystery will be found the hand of a woman. That the murder was committed at the

direction of some woman whose life has touched Taylor's is the opinion held by many investigators. Further support was given this theory late last night when Mrs. MacLean told officials that the person she saw leaving the Taylor home "might have been a woman dressed in man's clothes."

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February 7, .1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Chauffeur Gives Fresh Lead in Taylor Case

A chauffeur employed by the Yellow Taxicab Company last night gave officers investigating the murder of William Desmond Taylor, slain film director, what was regarded as one of the hottest leads thus far uncovered in the attempts to solve the mystery of the fatal shooting last Wednesday night.

This chauffeur, who was taken in tow at once by Detective Sergeants King, Cato and Cahill, is named Meister and is reported to have taken a party from the vicinity of the shooting soon after the slaying. He was accompanied on his trip to the detective bureau by Sidney Glover, an official of the taxicab company.

Captain of Detective Adams declined to discuss the new phase of the case. Earlier in the day he talked with the two new witnesses. They were not to be found last night, and were declared to be with the two detective sergeants.

Several new angles in the investigation were opened up yesterday by deputy sheriffs working under the personal direction of Sheriff Traeger, Undersheriff Biscailuz and Criminal Superintendent Al Manning.

While Mr. Manning refused to disclose what lines the Sheriff's investigation is taken, he admitted his officers, Deputies Harvey Bell and Fox and Nolan, were following leads that have developed new aspects of the murder mystery.

"I cannot state at this time what we are working on, but the information

uncovered by this office is very significant and is vital to the solution of the crime," Mr. Manning said late last night.

Centering their efforts on finding Edward F. Sands, suspect in the investigation of the murder, detectives on the case yesterday followed several clues while Captain of Detective Adams held secret conferences with at least four important witnesses...

Twice during the day all the detectives working on the case were called together in conference with Capt. Adams. They all declared they are concentrating their efforts toward finding Sands, the former employee of Mr. Taylor and an asserted robber and forger for whose arrest Mr. Taylor swore out a warrant.

Few definite concrete developments were noticeable as a result of the day's activities. Further facts concerning the past and mysterious life of the slain man were uncovered. Many supposed clues were checked by the officers and found valueless.

Charles Eyton, manager for the Famous Players-Lasky studio, where Mr. Taylor, a director of international reputation, was under contract, held a long talk with Capt. Adams. Henry Peavey, negro houseman who discovered the body of his employer, also was a visitor at the police station.

Late in the day it was declared by the officers that missing letters known to have been kept by Mr. Taylor shortly before his death have an important bearing, in their belief, on the case.

Among these letters were several written by Mabel Normand, film star, to Mr. Taylor. Everyone questioned by Capt. Adams concerning the letters has denied having them or removing them from the Taylor apartment on South Alvarado street, where his body was found last Thursday morning.

Mr. Eyton, who was one of the first outsiders called to the scene, again yesterday said he had not seen them.

Miss Normand last Saturday called at the house for her letters. She has not seen those which she wrote.

Public Administrator Bryson, who has charge of the estate, says he has not seen them.

The District Attorney's Office makes similar avowal.

The visit of Mr. Eyton to the Detective Bureau was for the purpose of aiding in the search for Sands. Several witnesses who know the fugitive say they saw him in Los Angeles about the time of the shooting. At least two persons believe they saw him on the night of the shooting. One woman saw Sands within a block of the Taylor home within less than two hours of the time set for the murder...

The investigation has simmered down to a process of elimination, with the finding of Sands as the first obstacle. Hundreds of theories, tips and clues have been investigated, weighed and discarded or added to the chain of circumstances being assembled by the detectives.

During the day, representatives of Mabel Normand, who was the last friend who saw Mr. Taylor alive last Wednesday, called at the police station to tell the detectives that Miss Normand was going to have her telephone number changed to avoid the continual stream of calls made for her recently.

The pink silk nightgown--a delicate, lacy piece of woman's lingerie--that was found in the bachelor apartments of the slain man yesterday held attention of many persons. The garment was one of several formerly at the house, according to the statement of a former employee, and was there during the six months Peavey worked there.

Employees preceding Peavey declared that the silken things so strange to a man's wardrobe were used occasionally, or at least were taken from their accustomed places, unfolded and replaced. Reports were circulated during the day that the owner of the night dress had been identified as an actress friend of the dead man.

No official confirmation of this could be obtained. The garment, known to have been at the home on the morning the body was found, was not available for public scrutiny.

The comment made by Mr. Eyton regarding the missing letters was as follows:

"I have taken no letters from Mr. Taylor's home the day the body was found, nor have I taken any, or had any letters given me by anyone since.

There were a number of papers and documents there. I watched the representative of the Public Administrator's office sort the papers. It was more than a half-hour after the body was found that I arrived there. In the meantime scores of persons went through the house."

Mr. Eyton joined Capt. Adams and Public Administrator Bryson in the opinion that if any of Mabel Normand's letters were taken away from the Taylor home, they were taken by the man who killed Taylor or by some friend of Miss Normand who wanted to return them to the comedy star.

"I have no interest in any of these letters," Mr. Eyton continued. "If I had them I would turn them over to the police, because I am interested only in one thing, and that is the capture of the man who murdered 'Bill' Taylor, my friend. I hardly think, however, that there was anything in the missing letters that would be of any assistance in the search for the slayer."...

Several women and three men, all of whom knew Sands by sight, say that they saw him on the streets of the city during the last month. None of them spoke to him and several of them under close questioning by the police admit that they may have been mistaken...

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February 7, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Hands in Air When Shot

Bullet Marks Found in Clothing Give Detectives New Theory About Taylor Murder

When William Desmond Taylor, noted film director, was shot to death in his South Alvarado street apartment last Wednesday night, he was standing with his arms lifted over his head and a .38-caliber revolver pressed against his side, some six inches below his left armpit and toward the back. Such is the new theory of the police advanced yesterday for the first time.

They base their belief on a careful examination made yesterday of the

clothing worn by the noted motion picture man when he fell, mortally wounded, to the floor of his living-room, about 8 o'clock Wednesday night.

In a conference of the detectives working on the case, including Police Detective King of the District Attorney's office as well as the officers detailed from the detective bureau, a minute inspection of the garments was made.

The hole through which the bullet entered was powder-marked. The marking was of such a nature that they decided conclusively he was shot by a revolver held pressed against his coat.

By comparing the entrance of the bullet in the coat, and in the vest, a remarkable new fact was disclosed. The holes do not correspond in location when the coat is adjusted normally about the wearer.

But when the arm was raised the hole in the coat was brought up to the corresponding hole in the vest. This fact led to the definite conclusion of the investigators that when Mr. Taylor was shot down he knew he was being attacked, that he was compelled to hold his arms overhead by the assailant.

The discovery of the new-found facts did not change the police theory that the slayer slipped into the house by the front door while Mr. Taylor was absent for a few minutes. At that time he was escorting Miss Mabel Normand, celebrated film actress, to her automobile, after she had made a short call for the purpose of getting a book. During the temporary absence of Mr. Taylor, the assassin stepped quickly into the house and crouched behind the door, the police believe. From this position he had the drop on the film director when the latter re-entered and closed the door.

That he ordered Mr. Taylor to put up his hands is now the belief of the officers. And while the victim was standing in this position he was shot to death, probably after a conversation, if the slaying was done for revenge.

Some of the officers believe the shot could have made the same entrance holes in the coat and vest if Mr. Taylor was bending over to seize a chair at his writing desk in order to defend himself against the intruder. To support this belief they point to the overturned chair found in the apartment--the only suspicion that an attempted struggle was staged.

To verify the belief the revolver was pressed against the coat when fired, Detective King took some of the clothing and experimented with shots fired from various distances. This confirmed the theory, he said.

The piece of lead which penetrated Mr. Taylor's lung and all but went completely through his body was positively identified as having been fired from a .38-caliber, short, soft-nosed cartridge. This type of shell is commonly used, although it will not fit an automatic weapon.

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February 7, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Missing Link is Welded

Slain Director Took Dancing Lesson Between Five and Six o'Clock on Fateful Day

The mystery of the missing hour in the last day of William Desmond Taylor's life, before he was murdered, was accounted for last night, after a diligent search and investigation of all the slain director's movements and activities.

Since the discovery of Taylor's body last Thursday morning, Detective Sergeants Herman Cline, Cahill and Cato have been endeavoring to account for every hour of his movements on the day of the murder. From the minute he arose from his bed in the morning to the time of Mabel Normand's departure from his apartment a few minutes before the fatal shot was fired, every hour of his movements during that day had been checked over--but there was one hour enveloped in mystery for which nobody could account, yet uncovered through scores of persons were questioned.

That hour was between 5 and 6 p.m., two hours before he was killed. Henry Peavey, the colored valet, stated that Mr. Taylor had left the house at 5 p.m., after announcing he was going for a walk. He left instructions with

Peavey to inform Miss Normand if she called that he would return at 6 p.m. He returned at that hour.

Where had Taylor spent that hour?

The Times learned last night where Taylor had spent every minute of the missing hour, and the identity of the young woman with whom he spent it.

Taylor, after leaving his apartment at 5 p.m., walked south on Alvarado street, remaining on the east side of the street. He walked two blocks to Orange street, crossed Orange street and turned east. Half a block east of Alvarado street he entered a large building, conversed briefly with a young man seated at a desk, met a young woman who knew him and for the next hour danced with her.

He was taking his regular dancing lesson at the Payne Dancing Academy. The young woman was Mrs. Waybright, his dancing instructor.

"He was just brushing up on some of the old steps," Mrs. Waybright stated last night. "He had always taken private lessons. His previous lesson was taken on the preceding Monday night. On Wednesday night I noticed nothing unusual about his actions. He was as jolly, though quiet and reticent to talk, as on his preceding visits. He never discussed his personal affairs with me while we danced. We only talked of his progress in dancing. Had there been any worry on his mind on his last visit I would have noticed it.

"He had completed one course, and before his departure purchased a new set of tickets. he said he wanted to take up a tango step the following evening, which would have been Thursday. He added that he possibly would be on location Thursday, and that if he did not appear that evening he would surely come back on Friday. He did not come to the academy in his car on Wednesday night."

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February 7, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

In William D. Taylor's effects two love letters, written in a school-girl code, were found. One of them is reproduced above. It is a code familiar to thousands of youngsters. The letter reads as follows.

"I love you--oh, I love you so.

"I had to come down because mama remarked that I always seemed to feel rather happy after being out with you. So here I am. Camouflage.

"Furthermore, I am feeling unusually fine (more camouflage). I will see you later. God love you as I do."

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February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mary Minter's Note Tells Love of Taylor

The story of a wonderful love.

A young girls' adoration beating its timorous wings under the shadow of impending calamity.

When a carefully treasured letter fluttered from the pages of a book, Thursday, it revealed a love idyll charming in its conception, dramatic in its development, peculiarly sad in its unfulfillment.

The love story of Mary Miles Minter and William Desmond Taylor.

Out of the cloud of circumstances brought to light by the murder of the famous director shines the clear ray of this remarkable romance between the cultured, dignified man of 50 and the beautiful ingenue of 19.

In the search of Mr. Taylor's effects, conducted the morning after he met his mysterious death, chance played a freakish role. The examination virtually had been concluded. One of the investigators, selecting a book from the case at random, idly fluttered the pages.

Out dropped a letter.

He picked it up and found it to be an ingenuous love letter written on heavily embossed stationery.

"Dearest: I love you--I love you--I love you," it read. And below this reiterated sentence appeared a line of crosses followed by a single cross, heroic in size. At the end it said, "Yours always. Mary."

And on the wings and body of the butterfly crest appeared the words, "Mary Miles Minter."

Miss Minter did not deny the authorship of the letter.

"I did love William Taylor," she said. "I loved him deeply and tenderly, with all the admiration and respect a young girl gives to a man with the poise and culture of Mr. Taylor."...

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February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill last night were questioning one of the most widely known motion picture actresses in the entire profession, expecting to secure vital information upon what several of the investigators believe to be the overshadowing theory in the William D. Taylor case.

This theory is that a man who was in love with the actress in question, having the motive of jealousy, may have acted in response to the promptings of a wounded heart.

Six headquarters men spent more than two hours late yesterday afternoon receiving the details of a story believed to be of great possible significance from C. M. Meister, a driver for the Yellow Taxicab Company.

Meister was brought to police headquarters by S. Cooper, assistant general manager of the company. The narrative was, in substance, as follows:

"On last Wednesday night at 10:55 o'clock I picked up four passengers at 620 South Broadway--two men and two women.

"Upon entering the cab one of the men pulled up the window between themselves and me, apparently, so that I might not overhear their conversation.

"I drove them to a number in the Wilshire district. (The Examiner is in

possession of this number, but is withholding it for the present at the request of the police.)

"One of the men and the two women left the cab and went into the apartment house. I afterwards learned that their apartment was on the second floor.

"The other man remained in the cab and asked me to drive him to the Ambassador Hotel. I did so. He was in the hotel about fifteen minutes. He came out, carrying a leather brief case.

"Shortly after entering the cab he appeared to show the greatest anxiety concerning this brief case. He handed it to me and said, 'I want you to deliver that. For God's sake, don't lose it.'

"His order to me was, 'Drive to 400 Alvarado street. At least, that was the number I caught. There was a 400 in it, but I am not sure whether it was the even number.'

Taylor, it will be recalled, lived at 404-B South Alvarado.

"I said to him," continued Meister, "'Don't you mean 400 ----- street,' naming it.

"'Sure,' he said; 'I made a mistake.'

"He asked me several times if the brief case was safe. I said it was. But he was very uneasy. 'Give it to me,' he said, and he took it and put it beside him.

"When we reached the Santa Monica carline--at Santa Monica boulevard and Western avenue, I think it was, he asked me to stop.

"'I'm going to take the car here,' he said. 'You will please deliver this,' and he handed me the brief case.

"'There'll be a woman looking out the upstairs window waiting for it,' he told me.

"I drove directly to the number on ----- street. Immediately upon my arrival a woman rushed out and asked, 'Have you got it? Did he put it in a box?'

"I said, 'I guess this is what you mean,' and I gave her the brief case.

"Just then a man came running from the side of the house; he was the man

I had let out there with the two women.

"He got into the cab. 'Drive me around,' he said--'just keep going around the block!

"I drove him around three or four blocks and then returned to the apartment house. There was a car--a roadster in front.

"When he saw this he became very much excited. 'Don't let them see me,' he said. 'Drive around again.'

"So I drove him around several blocks the second time. The car was still there when we returned, and in even greater excitement he said, 'Don't let them see me. Keep on driving until that car is gone.'

"Upon coming back the third time he asked, 'Is the car still there?'

"'Yes,' I said, 'but they are turning on the light. I guess they are getting ready to leave.'

"Just then a street car passed us. 'Keep behind this car,' he said, 'so they won't see me.'

"But the street car went farther on than I had counted on and when we came opposite the roadster, which was then leaving, we were in plain view.

"Upon seeing this my passenger gave an exclamation of alarm, fell to the floor and pulled down the curtain on the side towards the roadster.

"When we stopped at the apartment house he got out and said, 'I was a ----- fool to do this thing'

The police last night were preparing to go to this house and question the occupants.

What strikes them with greatest force is that the man who figured in the dramatic attempt at concealment wore a muffler around his neck. It was the man in the muffler whom Mrs. Douglas MacLean saw leaving Taylor's house the night of the murder.

If this man had anything to do with the crime, a new theory enters. This is that the murder may have been committed between the time Meister took the four persons to the Wilshire street address and the time the man wearing the muffler rushed out and asked to be driven around the block--in other words while the first man was away on his errand to the Ambassador Hotel.

Taylor's house is four blocks west of the home mentioned by the taxi driver. It would be possible to go from Taylor's apartment to this one through alleys, thus eluding detection.

If Meister's passenger had anything to do with the crime, then, the police say, he must have called on Taylor soon after Mabel Normand left, probably had a talk with the film director and went away.

Then came the episode of the brief case, which is supposed to have contained letters once possessed by Taylor and now missing.

There was sufficient time while the first man had gone to the Ambassador for a person to have walked from the Wilshire street address to Taylor's house, committed the crime and returned.

The only apparent discrepancy is as to the time the shot was fired.

The police yesterday were taking a new view of this subject. Testimony that a shot was heard about 8 o'clock was so uncertain, they said, that no great reliance could be placed in it.

On the other hand, a person has been found who heard a shot somewhere near 11 o'clock.

The man with the muffler, it was learned yesterday, left for San Francisco the day following the murder.

The police were greatly impressed with Meister's story, particularly those parts describing the actors in this mysterious drama as exceedingly nervous.

First, the man who went to the hotel was excited and nervous over the brief case.

The woman who rushed out to receive it was excited to the point of agitation.

The man with the muffler was in a state of frenzy almost about being seen by the person or persons in the roadster.

The woman who took the brief case is described as about 30. Meister took her to be a motion picture actress.

The man who went to the Ambassador was about 30, of the business man type.

The tall man in the muffler was about 35 and Meister supposed he was a motion picture actor.

None of the Sheriff's officers seriously entertains the opinion that Edward F. Sands, discharged secretary-valet of Taylor, was the assassin.

This is in contradiction to the strongly expressed opinion yesterday of Captain of Detectives David L. Adams.

"I am now completely convinced," said Captain Adams, "that Sands is the man we want. I believe it was he who committed the crime.

"We have today established important facts which enable us to reconstruct the crime with what we believe is absolute accuracy.

"Experiments made by our own and outside gun experts demonstrate beyond question that the shot which killed Taylor was fired from a distance of not more than an inch or two from his body.

"We have made many tests with the coat which he wore when the shot struck him down. In the test which produces a hole similar to that already appearing in the coat the muzzle of the revolver was held an inch from the garment.

"When Taylor was shot he had his left arm up.

"We believe that the murderer ordered 'Hands up!' and shot him when he obeyed that command.

"The way I re-frame the picture is this: Sands was lurking around waiting for an opportunity to enter the house, possibly for robbery, and it may have been for some deeper purpose which we have not fathomed.

"The known facts concerning the attitude of this man towards Taylor convince me that we do not know the whole story; we are still far from explaining, for instance, why Sands sent Taylor the pawn ticket and the letter signed 'Alias Jimmy V.' We are also in the dark as to why Sands used Taylor's old name, 'Deane-Tanner,' when he pawned the stolen jewelry.

"Either when or after Taylor accompanied Miss Normand to her car, leaving the front door open, this man slipped into the house. And when the director entered he was there, covering Taylor with his revolver.

"It is possible that Sands went there to secure something--a letter or a

document, perhaps--and that he actually did carry away something.

"It is urged against the Sands theory that he would have robbed the dead body, would have stripped off the diamond ring, extracted the money from the pockets and taken the platinum watch.

"I have no doubt he would have done so under ordinary circumstances, as his whole career proves him to be a thief, but this situation was extraordinary. Without having purposed to do so, it may be, he murdered his former master.

"And then, panic-stricken, he hurried from the house, his terror overcoming for the moment his natural instinct to rob."

Although Captain Adams urges his theory with great earnestness, a number of the men working under him do not accept his view of the crime.

They cannot conceive that Sands, if he were the man, would have passed over jewelry and money worth nearly \$2000 and to be had for the stooping down and taking.

However, Captain Adams yesterday issued this instruction: "Find Edward F. Sands. Whether he is the murderer or not, he must be eliminated."

The identity of the person who extracted the Mabel Normand letters from Taylor's effects remained as much of a mystery yesterday as on the first day of the investigation.

It is believed that a man of high position and great influence in the motion picture world found and took these, and others, thinking their discovery would injure the fortunes of actresses in whom he has a business interest.

Public Administrator Frank Bryson yesterday admitted that he did not know where they were nor who took them.

"When our representative arrived at the Taylor home Thursday morning," said Mr. Bryson, "the room was filled with detectives, motion picture people and reporters, and the premises were swarming with them.

"This office took over all property, effects and documents involved in the estate. Naturally all letters he left belonged to the estate and it was illegal to remove anything. However, I do not understand that anything of

money value was taken."

Several letters received yesterday by the police department and the Sheriff's office relating to the record of Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored valet, led Captain Adams to question the negro at greater length regarding his possible knowledge.

Peavey is the man who found Taylor's body and gave the alarm. According to Captain Adams, Peavey said nothing new of importance.

It is the natural assumption of the detectives and Sheriff's officers that Peavey must have known the persons who called on Taylor. He has stated, however, that only four or five persons called during his six month's service with the director. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. Douglas MacLean and Mabel Normand.

In trying to learn what persons were entertained, Sheriff's officers have made a widespread investigation. Yesterday, it is reported, they learned from a source what may or not be authentic--that is something being investigated--that a noted film actress who has been mentioned frequently in stories relating to the case, made several calls at Taylor's apartment at night.

It is also asserted by this same person that the actress said she was engaged to marry Taylor; that, in fact, they were to be married within a few weeks.

But about New Year's Taylor and the woman had a violent quarrel and the director returned home under stress to such great emotion that he broke down and cried.

This actress is one of those who wrote many letters to the picture director, and it is her letters particularly about the disappearance of which the police are so curious.

Following yesterday's discovery that the bullet was fired at short range, the theory of suicide was advanced. The absence of a weapon would appear to make this entirely untenable. Also, according to the findings of Dr. A. F. Wagner, county autopsy surgeon, it would have been practically impossible for Taylor to have shot himself in the manner employed.

It is only by a wild flight of imagination that one could picture him as a suicide, the police say, because there would have to be discovered in this theory some person who entered the apartment after the tragedy and took the revolver away.

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February 7, 1922

W. W. Kane

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mabel Scouts Jealousy as Crime Motive

"There can be no girl who was jealous of Mr. Taylor's attentions to me. His attitude toward me was only that of a friend who fostered my interest in the better things of life--music, painting and books.

"We never spoke of love, neither of us was interested in the other in that way. If there was a girl with whom he was infatuated it surely was someone else, not I."

Mabel Normand, famous motion picture star, ill from the persistent questioning by those who are seeking to find some one who might have taken the life of William D. Taylor in a spirit of frenzied jealousy, vehemently denied yesterday any love element that existed between her and the slain director.

"Shortly after the inquest Saturday detectives investigating the case came to me and thanked me for my cooperation in aiding in the solving of this terrible tragedy," she said. "They told me they are thoroughly convinced it was an unfortunate coincidence that I was seen with him a short time before his murder.

"Everything that I know that might lead to detection of the murderer I have told them. And no one would welcome the apprehension of the culprit that committed that foul deed more than I.

"There have been insinuations made that I went to Mr. Taylor's house

after the inquest Saturday to seek some of my letters to him. That is grossly erroneous. I went to the bungalow at the request of the detectives and in their company and solely for the purpose of showing to them the exact location of the furniture as it was placed in the room before I left. It was to show how disordered the place had become after the intrusion of the murderer.

"If Peavey, his colored servant, says that I had asked him about any girls that Mr. Taylor had ever been interested in, it is a venomous fabrication. Never in my life have I spoken to this man directly, and never have I talked to him in any way except in the presence of others, including Mr. Taylor. And as for the subject of girls--the question never entered my mind."

Miss Normand, heavy-lidded from lack of sleep, and worn from the grueling inquisitions to which she has been subjected since the murder, reiterated that no one welcomed the apprehension of the culprit more than she.

As for the insinuations that Mr. Taylor had been an attendant at so-called "dope" parties, she added another vehement denial.

"He loved clean, simple pleasures, not this sordid type," she said. He was one of the most temperate men in his habits I have ever known.

"He sent me flowers, occasionally, yes. But it was only because he knew I loved them and like to have them about my house. But there never was an expression of love sent with them. He knew our friendship didn't extend to that--it was purely platonic, and like that of an older man interested in a girl who sought mental improvement, and the things that better one in the cultural world."

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February 7, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Pink Silk "Nightie" From Taylor Home Traced To Actress

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--A pale pink nightgown of filmy silk, trimmed with lace, positively identified as the property of a certain famous motion picture star--whose name has already been mentioned in connection with the murder at his home here last Wednesday night of William Desmond Taylor, photo-play director--is now in the possession of the police and may play a dominant part in a solution of the mystery of Taylor's death.

Other developments of the day were an assertion by Taylor's valet that Mabel Normand had told him she was going to marry the picture director, and renewed search for a young New York man now supposed to be at the Mexican border.

The nightgown, previously described to the police by servants of the slain director, disappeared from Taylor's apartment on the day after the murder, but was found today after a diligent search by the authorities investigating the tragedy...

In this case, it is said, the star to whom the nightgown is believed to belong is not a comedienne. The police do say the article has been identified positively as the property of a "celebrated motion picture star," however.

A laundry mark of three letters gave police their clues to the ownership of the dainty garment.

It had been kept in a box in a drawer of Taylor's dresser, Henry Peavey, negro valet of the murdered director, admitted. Peavey told the police, under pressure, that the gown had mysteriously disappeared the day after the murder. It was not until late today that it turned up, in the hands of a police detective who had been working independently on the case.

This detective obtained what he declared to be positive identification of the nightgown.

The injection of the woman film star into the mystery gives rise to more speculation about the identity of the assassin, as it enlarges the field of suspects to include all of the many men admirers of the girl, for at the present time the police view every intimate friend of the woman who were

known to be close associates of Taylor as a potential enemy and possible murderer through the jealousy which Taylor's attachment may have aroused...

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February 7, 1922

NEW YORK TRIBUNE

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...Miss Normand was wrapped in one of those vampish kimonos that was seen in a recent film production this afternoon when The Tribune correspondent attempted to obtain from her some inkling of the contents of her letters. Her eyes, minus the magic of the make-up box, showed signs of worry, and her hair had not benefited by the treatment of the experts who beautify film stars before they make their appearance before the camera.

"Positively Mr. Taylor and I were not engaged to be married, and neither of us thought of such a thing," she said in a voice that carried conviction.

"But, in the event that others might have mistaken your intimate friendship for Mr. Taylor for something more serious, do you know who might have been expected to be jealous?" was asked.

"No, on my honor, I know of no woman who might have been jealous of our friendship," said Miss Normand. "Neither is there any man who would have had the slightest reason for resenting our friendship.

"Right here I want to add that I did not return to Mr. Taylor's house to find these letters and telegrams. They were of too innocent a nature to warrant such action. I am mighty sorry they are lost, however, as they would have proved everything I have said concerning them.

"I had known Mr. Taylor for a long time. We were interested in the same things, went to dinners together and made many mutual friends. But that does not necessarily mean anything, even among the much discussed picture people about whom one hears so much these days."

"But Henry Peavey (Taylor's valet) says that you"--

"Well, Peavey may have said that I talked of marrying Mr. Taylor, or

not, but it positively isn't true. I said nothing of the sort. We were just friends, that is all."

"Would you care to explain why friends would make use of the terms of endearment that are declared to have had their place in your letters and telegrams?"

"Such terms--if you care to call them endearing ones--were used in their lighter sense only," she said. "They did not apply to either of us. You can readily understand that nobody would seriously call a big, strong man like Taylor, a soldier and man of the world, baby, except in jest, and"--this with a demure shrug of her shoulder--"you wouldn't think he would seriously call me 'Blessed Baby,' would you?"...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...Mabel Normand, cinema star, talked freely with a representative of Universal Service late today in her luxurious apartments in a fashionable Los Angeles neighborhood.

Miss Normand was one of the last persons to see Taylor alive. She said:

"Mr. Taylor never attended a 'dope' party in his life. And I feel sure from my knowledge of the man that he certainly would never have tolerated the use of narcotics at a party in his home.

"As for the mysterious pink nightie which the valet says was found in his house, I have not the slightest idea to whom it could have belonged.

"While Mr. Taylor and I were pals and while I was a dear friend of his, I believe it really is a little unfair to me that my name should be so prominently connected with his. Mr. Taylor had many women friends besides myself.

"I can say with perfect candor that I know of no woman who could possibly have been jealous of my friendship with Mr. Taylor, no do I know of any man who could have been jealous of me.

"Please tell your millions of readers that I did not return to Mr. Taylor's home after the tragedy to get back my letters. I returned there with three detectives, at their request, to describe the appearance of the room when I left there early in the evening prior to Mr. Taylor's murder.

"There is nothing of any interest in the letters. I only wish that they could be found and published, too, so that people could see how uninteresting they were.

"As for Mr. Taylor having a violent temper, which might have won him enemies--well, that is absurd to anyone who knew him. Mr. Taylor was the most tactful and diplomatic man in the world.

"And I am sure that he was never afraid of anyone.

"Mr. Taylor's home for some time had been a center for the motion picture people.

"They used to step in and see him at all hours. We went with the same people and were excellent friends. But we never discussed getting married.

"In fact, I was rarely alone with Mr. Taylor. We were usually together in a crowd.

"It is certainly most unfortunate that I should have stopped by his home for a book the night he was murdered, but there is no more reason for trying to connect my name with Mr. Taylor's than there would be with any number of other picture stars.

"Mr. Taylor used to send me flowers three times a week and when I was back in New York he used to frequently send me telegrams. But that was all there was to it--just a lovely friendship.

"As for the valet saying that I inquired if Mr. Taylor took other girls, that is too ridiculous to require a reply.

"I was fond of Mr. Taylor because he was so sympathetic and when I was hard at work on a picture he understood how it was and never insisted that I go out to dinners and theatres and neglect my work.

"I only wish that I did know something that would help the police to find his murderer. I am eager to help."

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Pretty Actress Sought in Case

New York, Feb. 6--Lila Wylie, the beautiful actress who entered the limelight in New York last spring in connection with the "international blackmail ring" expose following the shooting of John Reid, wealthy manufacturer, is sought for questioning in the Taylor murder case in Los Angeles, it was learned today.

Miss Wylie's possible connection with the mystery is said to be linked with that of "Dapper Don" Collins, also sought by the Los Angeles police. The authorities expect her to shed considerable light on her own activities as they concerned William Desmond Taylor during the weeks just preceding the murder.

Miss Wylie disappeared from Los Angeles on the day the Taylor murder was discovered. She is not suspected of the crime, but the police expect her knowledge of Taylor to aid them. The police say they have traced her movements to Miami, Fla., where she is supposed to be registered at a fashionable resort hotel...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

ST. LOUIS GLOBE DEMOCRAT

Actress Given Third Degree After Silk Nightdress is Found

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--A motion picture actress was subjected to what the police termed a "long and grueling" questioning at her home here tonight, in an attempt to obtain a clue to the murder of William Desmond Taylor, director.

The actress was said to be widely known, but her name was withheld by the police. Two detective sergeants questioned her.

What they learned, they kept to themselves, but they admitted they were seeking to develop the previously advanced theory that Taylor had been slain by a jealous rival for the affections of the actress.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

SHEREVEPORT TIMES

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...A remarkable feature of Mrs. MacLean's statement is her uncertainty as to whether the murderer, assuming she saw the man who committed the crime, was a man or a woman. She admitted that the one she saw might have been a tall woman.

Now it is a known fact that Taylor himself was not addicted to any drug, but is reported that he attended two or three "hop" parties in order to get "atmosphere" and local color for pictures.

A number of Taylor's close friends, however, and these numbered several women, were addicts.

"We are going to dig deep in this phase," said one of the detectives, "because the whole scene of the crime may be laid in a setting in which the sale of drugs was the main spring."

Henry Peavey, the film director's valet, said, however, that he had never seen any form of narcotics in the Taylor home...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--A dainty pink silk nightgown, bearing three initials of a motion picture star of the first magnitude, is held at police headquarters tonight as the latest clew in the William Desmond Taylor murder

case.

The delicate garment disappeared from its customary receptacle, a locked box in a bureau drawer at Taylor's home, on the night of the tragedy, his valet, Henry Peavey, admitted to police.

"I didn't know where it was," Henry explained, "so I didn't say anything about it."

Tonight it transpired that the gown had been in possession of a police detective who has been quietly working lines of his own. The detective informed his superior, Capt. David Adams, that he had verified the ownership as indicated by the initials. A small laundry mark also checked, he said.

The little star to whom the garment is said to belong is not a comedienne who has been mentioned prominently in connection with the Taylor murder. She has gained much publicity during the last year because of numerous wealthy and prominent young men who have been seen in her company and to whom she was variously reported as engaged.

Finding the nightgown in Taylor's possession, according to the police, widens the scope of possible suspects in the murder case to take in the wide circle of admirers of its owner--who is known to the police.

The names of young men of national prominence and great wealth are on the list. Some are now in Los Angeles and others in New York.

Hollywood was shocked by the disclosure. The name of the star involved was on every tongue. Taylor's closest friends professed amazement. They were utterly confused, they said, by the discovery and by the facts now coming to light which indicate the complexity of the dead man's past.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--Those letters written by Miss Mabel Normand to William Desmond Taylor, murdered movie director, letters signed "Your Baby"

and "Blessed Baby," letters which disappeared after the slaying, have cluttered up the investigation of the crime and given the police another puzzle.

One contingent of the detectives working on the mystery questioned a big director today in his studio.

They had learned, they say, that two weeks ago this man endeavored to make Taylor give him the letters that are missing. They questioned this director for a long time. He denied that he knew anything about the letters.

He denied that he had ever asked Taylor for them. He said he had no reason for wishing to recover them, and would not have asked for them even if he knew they were in existence...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922
CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--The investigation into the murder of William Desmond Taylor switched this afternoon to another prominent movie director. Detectives were hurried to a Hollywood motion picture studio to question him. It was said that two weeks ago he endeavored to obtain from Mr. Taylor letters and telegrams written to him by Mabel Normand. The director was reported to have visited the Taylor home within an hour after the body of the slain director was found...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922
Edward Doherty
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Los Angeles, Feb. 6--...Capt. Adams' conference in his office late today with Charles Eyton, referred to the scenes at the bungalow. And eventually

they got back to Mabel's letters.

"I had heard about those letters," the captain said. "I looked for them when I went to the house Thursday noon, some time after Taylor's body had been found. They were gone."

"It is possible some of Taylor's friends who got there first took the letters," Eyton said. "I would have taken them if I had been there in time."

There were perhaps a dozen film stars at the house before the police arrived. One of the first to get there was Arthur Hoyt, a friend of long standing.

Hollywood Studio Production During the Week of Taylor's Murder

The following studio activity in Southern California was taking place during the week that Taylor was murdered in 1922, according to the trade publication CAMERA!. The working title of a film was sometimes changed prior to the film's release. Of course "all-star" usually means "no star." Some of the films were "cutting" (in the editing room), which would mean that the actual filming had been completed.

DIRECTOR	STAR	TYPE OR TITLE
APOLLO PRODUCTIONS, Astra Studio		
Arthur Delmar	Jack Pollo	"The Live Man"
BELASCO STUDIOS		
F. H. MacQuarrie	All-Star	Dramatic Feature
BLANCHARD FILM CO., Cosmoart Studios		
J. E. Bowen	Non-Star	Educational

CAMPBELL COMEDIES, Fine Arts Studio

W. S. Campbell	All-Star	Educational Comedies
Jas Clemens	All-Star	Educational Comedies

CENTURY FILM CORP., 6100 Sunset Blvd.

Alf Goulding	Lee Moran	Comedy
Fred Fishback	Brownie	Comedy
A. Gilstrom	Baby Peggy	Comedy
Tom Buckingham	Harry Sweet	Comedy
Jesse Robbins	Trained Horse	Comedy

CHARLIE CHAPLIN STUDIO., 1416 La Brea Ave.

Charlie Chaplin	Charlie Chaplin	3-reel Comedy
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CHRISTIE COMEDIES, 6101 Sunset Blvd.

H. Beaudine	B. Vernon	2-reel Comedy
Scott Sidney	Neal Burns	2-reel Comedy
Al Christie	Viorel Daniel	2-reel Comedy

CINAL FILMS, Cosmoart Studios

J. E. Bowew	J. G. Payton	Science of Jiu-Jitsu
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COMMONWEALTH MOTION PICTURE PRODUCERS, 829 E. Windsor Rd., Glendale

F. Caldwell	All-Star	Western Drama
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CUMMINGS, IRVING, PRODUCTION COMPANY, Universal Studios

Irving Cummings	Irving Cummings	"The Man From Hell's River"
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THE CRUELLYWED COMEDIES

Herzig	Paul Weigel & Lila Leslie	2-Reel Comedies
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FAIRBANKS, CHESTER, PRODUCTIONS, Fine Arts Studio

Chester Fairbanks Chester Fairbanks & June Dawn 1-Reel Comedy

FINE ARTS STUDIO, 4500 Sunset Blvd.

Edwin Carewe All-Star Northwest

FOX STUDIO, N. Western Ave.

Reeves Eason	Buck Jones	"Heart of the Range"
Rosson	Tom Mix	"Free Range Lanning"
Durning	Dustin Farnum	"When Iron Turns to Gold"
Edgar Lewis	William Farnum	Western Drama
Harry Beaumont	Shirley Mason	"Up the Back Stairs"
Jerome Storm	John Gilbert	"In the Land of Beginning Again"

GARSON STUDIO

Harry Garson C. K. Young "The Modern Madonna"

GOLDWYN STUDIO

E. M. Hopper	All-Star	"Brothers Under the Skin"
Rowland Lee	All-Star	"The Dust Flower"

HAMILTON-WHITE COMEDIES, United Studios

Bob Kerr	Lloyd Hamilton	2-Reel Comedies
Jack White	Conley & Bowes	2-Reel Comedies

HARTER-WALL PRODUCTIONS, Bakersfield

L. E. Wall	Vera Glynn	2-Reel Comedies
L. H. Daves		Cartoon Comedies
E. Le Veque	Jim Baker	Educational & Novelties

INCE, THOMAS H., Culver City

Horne MacLean Farce Comedy

L. Hillyer	All-Star	"The Brotherhood of Hate"
Maurice Tourneur	All-Star	"Lorna Doone"
Scardon	Leah Baird	"When the Devil Drives"
John Griffith Wray	All-Star	"Finding Home"
Irvin Willatt	All-Star	"The Indian Drum"

HAMPTON, BENJAMIN B., PRODUCTIONS, United Studios

Hersholt-Peterson	All-Star	"Golden Dreams"
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KLUMB, ROY H., PRODUCTIONS, 5107 Hollywood Blvd.

Klumb-Thompson	All-Star	Drama
Klumb-	All-Star	Western Drama

KING VIDOR, 7200 Santa Monica Blvd.

King Vidor	Florence Vidor	"The Real Adventure"
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LASKY STUDIOS, 1520 Vine Street

Sam Wood	Gloria Swanson	"Beyond the Rocks"
Al Green	Tom Meighan	"The Proxy Daddy"
Joseph Henaberry	Jack Holt	"While Satan Sleeps"
Philip Rosen	Wallace Reid	"Across the Continent"
Paul Powell	Dorothy Dalton	Drama
William de Mille	All-Star	"Bought and Paid For"
Penrhyn Stanlaws	Betty Compson	"Over the Border"
George Melford	All-Star	"The Cat That Walked Alone"

LUDDY, EDWARD I., PRODUCTIONS, 2435 Wilshire Blvd.

I. E. Luddy	All-Star	5-Reel Westerns
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LYONS, EDDIE, PRODUCTIONS, Berwillla Studios

Eddie Lyons	Eddie Lyons	Comedies
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MAYER, LOUIS B. STUDIOS, 3800 Mission Blvd.

John Stahl	All-Star	"One Clear Call"
Fred Niblo	Anita Stewart	"Rose O' the Sea"

METRO STUDIO, Romaine and Cahuenga Ave.

Rex Ingram	All-Star	"Prisoner of Zenda"
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McFADDEN IVOR PRODUCTIONS, Francis Ford Studio

Norbert Myles	Robert Gordon	"Small Town"
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MISSION FILM CORPORATION, Jesse D. Hampyon Studio

Clarence Geldert	All-Star	"Carry on the Race"
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MORANTE PRODUCING COMPANY, Balboa Studio, Long Beach

Morante	George Chesebro	"N. W. Mounted"
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MORRIS, REGGIE, PRODUCTIONS, Jesse D. Hampton Studio

Reggie Morris	All-Star	2-Reel Comedy
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NEILAN, MARSHALL, PRODUCTIONS

Marshall Neilan	All-Star	"Fools First"
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O'CONNOR PRODUCTIONS

Thomas La Rose	O'Connor Franey	2-Reel Comedies
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ORNDORFF, JESSE W., PRODUCTIONS, Mayer Studio

Delmar Whitson	George Foley	"Scoring One on Newton"
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PARAGON PRODUCTIONS, Universal Studios

Bruce Mitchell	Jack Richardson	Feature Comedy
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PREFERRED PICTURES CORP.

Chet Withey	Katherine MacDonald	Untitled Comedy Drama
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PROTEAN ARTS, Fine Arts Studio

Raymond Cannon	Cecil Holland	Novelties
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RAY, CHARLES, PRODUCTIONS, Charles Ray Studios

Charles Ray	Charles Ray	Comedy Drama
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ROBERTSON-COLE STUDIO, Melrose and Gower

W. A. Seiter	Doris May	"Gay and Devilish"
Norman Dawn	Hayakawa	"The Vermillion Pencil"
Colin Campbell	Pauline Frederick	"Two Kinds of Women"
Louis Gasnier	All-Star	"The Call of Home"
Emile Chautard	Pauline Frederick	"The Glory of Clementina"

ROGELL-HALPERIN PRODUCTIONS, 4530 Hollywood Blvd.

Albert Rogell	Reeves-Aye	"Phantom of the Hills"
		"When West Meets East"

ROACH, HAL E., STUDIO, Culver City

F. Newmeyer	Harold Lloyd	2-Reel Comedy
Charles Parrott	Snub Pollard	Comedies
	"Paul" Parrott	Comedies
F. W. Jackman	Ruth Roland	Serial

SCHLANK STUDIO, 6050 Sunset Blvd.

Harry Burns		Animal Comedies
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SELIG-RORK, 3800 Mission Road

James Conway	Field-Van Dyke	"The Jungle Goddess"
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SUNSHINE COMEDIES, Fox Studios

Al St. John	Al St. John	"Hold Your Hat"
Summerville	Clyde Cook	"The Explorer"
Marshall	Harry Depp	
E. Kenton	Chester Conklin	"The Gas Tank"
Del Lord	Morton	"The Barnstormers"

SEELING PRODUCTIONS

Seeling	All-Star	5-Reel Drama
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UNITED STUDIOS, 5341 Melrose

Chester Bennett	Jane Novak	Untitled
Al Austin	Jackie Coogan	"Lost and Found"
Charles Bryant	Nazimova	"Salome"
Emory Johnson	All-Star	"The Midnight Call"
Sidney Franklin	Constance Talmadge	"The Divorcee"
James Young	Guy Bates Post	Drama
Allan Holubar	Dorothy Phillips	Drama
Frank Lloyd	Norma Talmadge	"The Duchess de Langeais"

UNIVERSAL STUDIO, Universal City

Edward Laemmle	Art Acord	"Buffalo Bill"
Albert Russell		Western
Tod Browning	Herbert Rawlinson	"Peter Man"
Scardon	Miss Dupont	"Thy Servant's Wife"
Jack Conway	Harry Carey	"The Land of the Lost"
W. Crafft	Hoot Gibson	
Hobart Henley	Priscilla Dean	"The Lass O' Lowrie"
King Baggot	Prevost	"Kissed"
King Baggot	All-Star	"Human Hearts"
Ed Kull	Lorraine-Walsh	"With Stanley in Africa"
Reginald Barker	All-Star	"The Storm"
Stuart Payton	Frank Mayo	"The Way Back"

Lloyd Ingram	Gladys Walton	"Second-Hand Rose"
Joseph Sedgwick		"The Singin' Kid"
Craig Hutchinson	All-Star	Comedies
Bob Hill		"Adventures of Robinson Crusoe"
Gil Pratt	Neely Edwards	"His Inheritance"

VITAGRAPH STUDIOS, 1708 Talmadge

David Smith	All-Star	"The Shanghraun"
William Duncan	William Duncan	"Man Hunters"
Semon-Taurog	Larry Semon	Special Comedy
B. Ensminger	Earle Williams	"Parkinton's Widow"

WARNER BROS. STUDIO, Sunset and Bronson

Jack Warner	Monte Banks	2-Reel Comedies
Louis W. Chandet	All-Star	Serial

WESTERN CLASSIC FILM CO., 1339 Gordon St.

Bob Horner	Monty Montague	"Neath Western Skies"
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WILSHIRE STUDIO, 201 N. Occidental

Thomas Heffron	Wanda Hawley	Untitled
Maurice Campbell	May McAvoy	Untitled
Edward Le Saint	Constance Binney	Untitled
Frank Urson	Mary Miles Minter	Untitled Comedy Drama

WILLIAMS, CYRUS J., CO., 4811 Fountain Ave.

Robert Bradbury	"Bill and Bob"	Educational
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WINTHER-REYNOLDS PROD., Meyer Studio

J. P. Winther	J. B. Warner	Drama
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Photoplay Editions of Taylor's Films

During the silent film era, hundreds of books were published as "photoplay editions"--novels with a few pictures from the film inside. Either the film was an adaptation of the novel, in which case the book was a special movie edition of the novel, or else the book was a novelized adaptation of the film story. Four films directed by William Desmond Taylor became photoplay editions. Unfortunately, there were evidently no photoplay editions of his most literary film adaptations--neither "Tom Sawyer," "Huckleberry Finn," nor "Anne of Green Gables" were published as photoplay editions of Taylor's films, although there were later photoplay editions of remakes during the sound era. The four photoplay editions of films directed by William Desmond Taylor are:

"The High Hand" by Jacques Futrelle (Grosset and Dunlap), with eight pictures from the 1915 film featuring Carlyle Blackwell and Neva Gerber. If you are seeking this book, be sure to obtain the movie edition, as the original 1911 edition without film stills is far more common.

"The Diamond From the Sky" by Roy McCardell (Dillingham), with 16 pictures from the 1915 serial featuring Irving Cummings, William Russell, and Lottie Pickford. The first 1/3 of the serial was directed by Jacques Jaccard; the final 2/3 was directed by William Desmond Taylor.

"How Could You, Jean?" by Eleanor Hoyt Brainerd (Grosset and Dunlap). With eight pictures from the 1918 film featuring Mary Pickford.

"Jenny Be Good" by Wilbur Finley Fauley (Grosset and Dunlap). With four pictures from the 1920 film featuring Mary Miles Minter.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about

Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 65 -- May 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

175 Errors and Contradictions in "A Cast of Killers"

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Another Mary Miles Minter film, "The Ghost of Rosy Taylor," is now available from Grapevine Video, their third Minter offering on home video.

A new \$25,000 reward has been offered by the NATIONAL ENQUIRER for information leading to the arrest and conviction of William Desmond Taylor's killer. The March 3, 1998 issue included an error-filled segment on the Taylor case in a section of "Unsolved Hollywood Mysteries," aptly calling the murder "Hollywood's most baffling mystery," and the reward was offered for any of the cases mentioned there. Also, the "E!" cable channel has a new series on "Mysteries and Scandals," with one episode examining the Taylor case.

2008 NOTE: The following article pertains to the 1986 edition of "A Cast of Killers." The author has subsequently corrected or addressed errors and omissions that have been brought to his attention, and the reader is encouraged to consult the 20th Anniversary edition.

175 Errors and Contradictions in "A Cast of Killers"

The first book-length examination of the William Desmond Taylor murder was A CAST OF KILLERS by Sidney D. Kirkpatrick (Dutton, 1986), based largely upon material gathered by noted film director King Vidor. That book was entertainingly written, very popular and it introduced many people to the Taylor case for the first time, presenting "proof" of the commonly-held viewpoint that Charlotte Shelby murdered Taylor. We have commented at length on Kirkpatrick's book in WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991); however we feel it is time for an updated re-examination, particularly since many more errors in A CAST OF KILLERS have come to our attention, and many of our cited references have been reprinted in previous issues of TAYLOROLOGY. Kirkpatrick was fortunate to have obtained a copy of the police file on the case, though only a very small portion of that material found its way into his book. It is that material from the police file which makes Kirkpatrick's book valuable for those interested in the Taylor case.

A CAST OF KILLERS makes constant reference to press reports but specific references are rarely cited. There is an enormous difference between press reports published immediately after the murder and the reports published much later. Right from the beginning there were inaccuracies in the press coverage of the case, and those inaccuracies tended to multiply as time passed.

A CAST OF KILLERS contains a very substantial amount of material which appears to be inaccurate, is strongly contradicted elsewhere, or is not

logical. The numbers in parentheses indicate the page numbers in A CAST OF KILLERS where the items are found; the numbers in brackets cite sources in endnotes, at the end of this newsletter. Some of the errors are found in interviews in the book and are not directly stated by Vidor/Kirkpatrick. In the analysis below, "official statement" refers to the statements taken by the District Attorney's office in 1922 and reprinted in KING OF COMEDY.[1] This list refers to the hardcover edition; a few errors in A CAST OF KILLERS were corrected in the subsequent paperback editions.

#1. (3) No early press reports made any mention of a fireplace--much less that letters were being burned there. Diagrams and photos of the murder scene were published in several newspapers--there was no fireplace in Taylor's home. Tales of the fireplace came many years later, in fanciful and highly unreliable accounts.

#2. (3) No early press reports stated that Peavey was washing dishes when the police arrived. Indeed, the statement makes no sense--what dishes could Peavey possibly have been washing? He had finished washing the supper dishes before departing the previous evening. The only unwashed items were the two cocktail glasses and shaker used by Mabel Normand and Taylor, and those items were still unwashed on the serving tray when reporters arrived later, as they were mentioned and photographed.

#3. (6) The theory that the killer "entered through the den, then shot Taylor in the back and left by the front door" makes no sense. What "den"? Taylor's home had two doors, a front door and a kitchen door, which Peavey had locked before leaving. The ground floor of Taylor's home only had a kitchen, dining room, and living room. There was no "den."

#4. (7) No early press reports indicated any pornographic pictures of Taylor and famous actresses had been found. All such reports came much later and were evidently magnified from the following press item reporting

the estate sale of Taylor:

District Attorney Woolwine yesterday...withheld from sale a number of pictures among the effects of William D. Taylor, murdered film director...There were some of young women in "art poses," the kind that Boston frowns upon. Some were exceedingly daring.[2]

#5. (7) No early press reports told of a secret locked closet with a collection of women's lingerie, tagged with initials and dated. Again, all such tales came many years later, in highly unreliable accounts.

#6. (6, 169, etc.) Although there were some early press reports implying that a nightgown had been found with the initials "M.M.M.", the cumulative press evidence indicates that a nightgown did exist and had been the property of Taylor for some time before the murder[3]--but there is strong reason to doubt the existence of any initials on the nightgown:

Herman Cline, former chief of detectives, who was one of the original investigators, recalled having found a garment "resembling a nightgown" in the Taylor apartment.

"But I am positive there were no initials on it," he declared...

"I was working on the case with Detective Ziegler," he said, "and the day following the murder we found a filmy flesh-colored gown in a dresser drawer in Taylor's bedroom. We also found several handkerchiefs bearing the initials M.M.M.

"We took the gown, handkerchiefs and a package of letters to the office of the late Thomas Lee Woolwine, then District Attorney, and turned them over to him.

"At the time I recall Woolwine as saying, 'I don't know how the gown will fit into the picture, as we cannot identify its owner.

There isn't even a laundry mark on it.' "

Cline added that he had no idea what had become of the exhibit.[4]
And even Hearst's L.A. EXAMINER reported in 1922:

Little importance was attached to the pink silk nightgown found in

the director's apartments. This, it was learned, had been laundered only once or twice and bore no initials or other marks by which its ownership might be determined.[5]

#7. (7) No early press reports indicated Taylor visited Berger on the morning before the murder. All early press reports only mention an afternoon visit and a telephone call.

#8. (7, 26, etc.) Some early press reports did indicate a substantial sum of money had been withdrawn by Taylor and then re-deposited. However, these press reports were soon retracted and an authoritative statement was made that no money had been withdrawn for several weeks prior to the murder.

...The fact that no deposit was made late that day [the day of Taylor's murder] was confirmed by W. T. S. Hammond, cashier of the First National Bank, who testified that some time during the morning Taylor deposited \$2300.

...At the same time it was definitely learned that the director did not draw \$2500 from the bank on the day preceding the murder, or at any other time within several weeks previous to his death.[6]

#9. (8) The description Taylor's sister-in-law gave of her husband did not "fit uncannily that of Edward Sands." There was a drastic difference in age and physical appearance:

Mrs. Deane-Tanner, when shown a photograph of Sands at her Monrovia home, pointed out points of dissimilarity...

Sands is short and stocky, with plump, round face. Dennis Deane-Tanner was slender like his brother...Besides, Mrs. Deane-Tanner explained, her husband's nose had been broken in athletics, which gave him a noticeable mark.[7]

#10. (8) The book states that Edward Sands had been fired by Taylor for stealing jewelry and forging checks. No, Sands was not "fired" by Taylor.

Taylor had gone on vacation to Europe while Sands had remained to take care of Taylor's home; Sands stole from Taylor and fled before Taylor returned.[8]

#11. (19) Taylor had indeed been sent to Runnymede, near Harper, Kansas, but his younger brother Denis had not.

#12. (19, etc.) The name of Denis (not Dennis) is misspelled throughout the book.

#13. (19) When Denis Deane-Tanner disappeared in 1912, he left behind a wife and TWO children, not one. His daughters were named Muriel and Alice.[9]

#14. (20) It is stated that "Captain Kidd, Jr." was a highly regarded film. On the contrary, reviews of the film were decidedly mixed. VARIETY (April 25, 1919) stated "As a whole it is rather a disappointment", and PHOToplay (July 1919) stated "...the play suffers because its director, William D. Taylor, considered it an inconsequential trifle."

#15. (20) It is stated that "Judy of Rogue's Harbor" was a highly regarded film. On the contrary, some reviews of that film were scathing. The DRAMATIC MIRROR (March 6, 1920) stated "It is hard to believe that William D. Taylor is responsible for the direction. Most of the time it is merely bad and never does it rise above mediocrity", and HARRISON'S REPORTS (February 17, 1920) stated "This picture should never have been made".

#16. (20) Police never made any early claims that Denis Deane-Tanner might have been Sands.

#17. (20) It was not in 1917 that Taylor's ex-wife saw him on the screen for the first time since he left her. She stated this took place in

1919.[10] There is very strong evidence that she knew Taylor was in Hollywood by 1915, but kept the information from her daughter.[11]

#18. (21) Press reports did indicate that Taylor met with his daughter in New York after his European trip in July 1921, but by July 21st he was already back in Los Angeles, so his meeting with his daughter must have taken a few days earlier than July 21.[12]

#19. (22) No early press reports quoted Mrs. MacLean as stating the person she saw "had an effeminate walk."

#20. (28) The published coded letters, which Mary Miles Minter later admitted writing, were not signed "Mary." They were unsigned.[13]

#21. (29) Mary NEVER claimed to have been at Casa de Margarita on the night of the murder. She ALWAYS said she was at the house on Hobart.[14]

#22. (29) None of the early press reports published within four years of the murder raised the question of Shelby's ownership of a gun. In fact it was eight months after the murder before any press report cast even a hint of suspicion in Shelby's direction.[15] Immediately following the murder, the press viewed Mary's involvement with Taylor as casting serious suspicion upon Marshall Neilan and Tommy Dixon, both of whom had dated Mary and were rumored to be jealous.[16]

#23. (29, etc.) Police never "granted the entire family complete exoneration from wrongdoing."

#24. (31) The most reliable press report indicated Walter Kirby served in the American Army, not the Canadian. It also indicated that the reason why Kirby was released was not because he had an "airtight alibi," but because the farmer could not be positive in his identification. There was also no

indication here that Kirby had served under Taylor in the army. This was the only newspaper to directly interview the rancher:

"I'd rather see fifty guilty men go free than convict one innocent man, especially when it meant life or death."

Andrew Cock, local rancher, today gave this explanation of why he declined positively to identify a man arrested at his insistence at Calexico last Thursday night by Los Angeles detectives working on the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery.

Cock and the two detectives, Sergeants Edward King and Jesse A. Winn, of the Los Angeles police department, returned home from the border last night without the prisoner, who was turned over to them in Calexico by Colonel Jose Avila, chief inspector of the Mexican secret service, at Mexicali. The man was freed after four hours of grilling by the detectives and Cock.

Because the man, who had previously been arrested in Los Angeles in connection with the same case and released after an investigation, appeared to Cock to be several inches taller than the man "Spike," whom Cock had given a ride between Tustin and Santa Ana on the night before the Taylor murder, the rancher refused to say positively that it was the same man.

There was convincing circumstantial evidence that the man, who was described as a former Los Angeles actor and taxicab driver, was the man "Spike" whom Cock had heard make threats against a certain Canadian army captain named "Bill" on the night before Taylor, who was himself said to be a former Canadian [sic] army captain, was slain. Cock himself had pointed the man out on the street in Mexicali as the man sought. But on closer inspection and realizing that the man's life might hang upon his decision, Cock would not make his identification absolute.

"They put it up to me," he said today. "They said, 'if you say he is the man, we'll take him with us.' But under the circumstances I couldn't do it."

The detectives, King and Winn, after Cook pointed him out on the street, recognized the man as the one whom they had investigated before.

After Avila had brought the man across the border into Calexico, they searched his room and found army trousers and leggings which answered in the description of those worn by "Spike" near Santa Ana. They did not find the coat, but did find a sweater coat similar to one worn by "Spike." Also they found a blank .38 caliber revolver cartridge and several loaded shells of the same caliber. "Spike" had dropped a .38 caliber gun when he got out of the car on the night Cock saw him. Taylor, the motion picture director, was killed by a .38 caliber bullet the next day...

The man showed a discharge from the United States army to explain the army uniform found in his possession. He had served three days in the army. There was nothing to show that he had been in the Canadian army.

Serving further to direct suspicion toward the suspect, as the man Cock had heard utter the veiled threat against the Canadian captain, Cock recalled that "Spike" had asked numerous questions regarding road and stage service between Santa Ana and the border.

However, Cock's recollection of "Spike" did not quite fit the new suspect's height, although in particulars the resemblance was convincing. It was difficult to compare his impression of "Spike's" height with that of the suspect because of the fact that "Spike" wore a heavy overcoat, whereas the man in the present instance wore a light suit. Identification was otherwise complicated by the fact that "Spike" wore a several days' growth of beard, whereas the other was smoothly shaven.

Cock had estimated "Spike's" age to be between 33 and 36. The other man claimed he was 23. Cock, however, believes that he is older.

Had Cock been able to see the "pardner," he could probably have

told whether the latter was the same man who was with "Spike" on the ride between Tustin and Santa Ana. "Spike's" partner had a scar over each ear, Cock noticed...[17]

#25. (32) The press reports and article by Ed King indicated that it was not "another man named Walter Kirby" who was arrested the same month--it was the same individual as was previously arrested.[18]

#26. (32) Otis Hefner's story said nothing about a fight between Taylor and a woman dressed like a man. In his clearly-fabricated story he blamed the killing on Mabel Normand.[19]

#27. (33) Peavey did not die in a ghetto in Sacramento. He spent the last year of his life in the Napa State Hospital, where he died.[20]

#28. (33) Mabel Normand's reported dying statement "I wonder who killed poor Bill Taylor?" sounds like press fabrication. A month before Mabel's death, during the 1930 flare-up of the case, Julia Benson (Mabel's companion) said:

"We have read to her [Mabel]--the nurses and I--but we have not mentioned anything of Mr. Taylor's death to her, and Miss Normand never talks about it."[21]

Most of the Los Angeles papers quoted other "last words," for example:

...The last words of the film star whose admirers numbered thousands were a plea.

"Don't leave me alone, please," she whispered an hour or so before her death to Mrs. Benson, her secretary and faithful friend for over eight years.

"I won't, dear," said Mrs. Benson, gently.

From then on Miss Normand sank rapidly. Several times she attempted to speak, but could not...[22]

#29. (35) MOVING PICTURE WORLD was not a "fan rag"--it was the most highly respected trade journal in the movie industry.

#30. (36) Florence Vidor never acted under William Desmond Taylor's direction. See Taylor's filmography in WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 433-445.

#31. (37) The book indicates that King Vidor and Colleen Moore were on location filming "The Sky Pilot" and were trapped in a snowstorm at the time of the Taylor murder. But "The Sky Pilot" was released in May 1921, many months before Taylor was murdered. Press items do indicate King Vidor was snowbound on location at the time of the Taylor murder, but he was with the crew of the film "The Real Adventure" starring his wife Florence Vidor, as indicated in this item published on February 6, 1922:

MOVIE COMPANY IS MAROONED

Florence Vidor's company left for Bear valley last week, arrived O.K.--and stuck. At last accounts it was marooned in the middle of a trackless snow desert hid up in the mountains. Its whereabouts were learned at the nearest point of approach by signal fires which were made, and General Manager Gus Inglis left with a dog team and all the snowshoes that could be gathered together. As it is impossible to reach the party otherwise the snowshoes will be dropped from an airplane...In the marooned movie party are Florence Vidor and King Vidor, her husband and director; Clyde Fillmore, leading man; David Howard, assistant director; George Barnes and Ed Roberts, cameramen, and other technical workers. Fortunately the party has a good supply of food and an experienced cook and is in a neighborhood where there is a plentiful supply of wood for fuel. The Vidors are filming "The Real Adventure" by Henry Kitchell Webster, and some of the story calls for rugged snowstorm scenes, which they will surely get.[23]

At the time of the Taylor murder, there were already rumors that Colleen Moore was engaged to John McCormick, and she was reportedly wearing his

engagement ring.[24]

#32. (40) Taylor's birth certificate clearly states Taylor was born on April 26, 1872--not 1867.[25]

#33. (41) Taylor was not waiting to go on the London stage in 1884. He was only 12 years old at that time and was still living at home.

#34. (41) Taylor's studio biographies frequently mention his years at Clifton College, but inquiry indicates that he never attended Clifton.[26]

#35. (42) As correctly stated later on p. 65 of A CAST OF KILLERS, Taylor was in the British Army, not Canadian.

#36. (42) The statement that Taylor never found the need for glasses is obviously false--one of the photographs in the book has him wearing glasses, and others have been published elsewhere.[27]

#37. (42) It is stated that Taylor never returned again to his family home in Ireland. But in an interview with his ex-wife it was reported: "Mrs. Robins said last night that shortly after their marriage she and Tanner visited his folks in Ireland...His family entertained her at their home in Fitzwilliam Square..."[28]

#38. (43) Fanny Davenport did not sign Taylor as her leading man; her leading man was her husband, Melbourne MacDowell, though Taylor did sometimes understudy the leading role.

#39. (43) Taylor did not "inexplicably" leave Fanny Davenport. He was with the Davenport theatrical company until she died on September 26, 1898, and the troupe disbanded.

#40. (43) The story that Taylor had gone to prison in England to protect a woman's honor, did not come from a Klondike miner; it came from H. M. Horkheimer, the president of Balboa Studios.[29]

#41. (45) There were several reports that Taylor's finances were not "in perfect order" when he deserted his wife:

...[Taylor] told Mr. Morrison...that he had left New York because of an overwhelming burden of debt he had contracted while an art dealer in New York.[30]

And:

Financial and other troubles were pressing hard upon W. C. Deane-Tanner at the time of his disappearance..."Pete's" habits, especially his extravagances, were held to blame...Pete confided that he had borrowed a great deal of money from Mr. Braker...but he was confident he and Mrs. Tanner would be remembered handsomely in Mr. Braker's will. Pete's hopes...were completely dashed in the summer of 1908, when Mr. Braker died suddenly and his will, filed shortly before Pete's disappearance, contained a brief clause to this effect: "To W. C. D. Tanner, I leave and bequeath the amounts of money owing to me by him..."At the time "Pete" Tanner deserted his wife and six-year-old daughter in October, 1908, he was in serious financial straits, owing thousands of dollars to Wilson Marshall...and to others.[31]

#42. (46) That Taylor experienced "memory losses" was attested to by others beside his wife. One of his former business associates reportedly stated:

"We all had noticed the facial neuralgia which distorted 'Pete's' face so, and he had several mental lapses during the time I knew him. We all agreed with Mrs. Deane-Tanner at the time of his disappearance that he had wandered away while seized with one of these spells."[32]

#43. (48) A CAST OF KILLERS strongly implies that reports of Taylor's

rumored homosexuality had not been published in contemporary newspaper accounts of the murder. Although the Los Angeles papers did not publish those rumors, they were indeed published elsewhere, e.g.: "The fact that his houseman, Henry Peavey, and his former secretary, Edward F. Sands, are both said to be 'queer persons,' has led to much speculation whether Taylor was abnormal himself." [33]; "It has been charged that Taylor was a member of an unnatural love cult, a cult comprised entirely of men." [34]

#44. (52) The romance between Neva Gerber and Taylor was certainly more than just "studio publicity." They went together from the Balboa Company to Favorite Players to American Film. While at American in Santa Barbara, Taylor reportedly was living in the same house with Neva and her mother. [35] Taylor continued to give Neva presents of cash and automobiles up until the time of his death. [36]

#45. (52) Mary Miles Minter was not at American Film while Taylor was employed there; he left in October 1915 [37] to go to Pallas (Paramount), and Mary did not arrive at American Film until mid-1916:

MOVING PICTURE WORLD (June 24, 1916): Led by the Mayor and various of his official family, Santa Barbara, Cal., residents gave a rousing reception to little Mary Miles Minter, the American-Mutual child star, on her recent arrival at the southern California city to begin work on her first Mutual feature release...

Neva Gerber was at American film during the entire period of time that Taylor was employed there.

#46. (53-4) The rumor, that the blacksmith in "Captain Alvarez" was Denis Tanner, was indeed mentioned in the papers, attributed to an anonymous New Yorker who stated he recognized him. [38]

#47. (58) Wallace Reid's drug problem reportedly began in 1919 when he was given morphine for an injury which occurred during the filming of

"Valley of the Giants." [39] Taylor last directed Reid in 1917 in "Big Timber." Reid had no drug problem when Taylor directed him.

#48. (60) Antonio Moreno was having a contract dispute with Vitagraph, and wanted Taylor's assistance to arbitrate it. Moreno's statement to the press indicates the scheduled meeting with Taylor on the morning after his death did not involve Woolwine at all.

"...we arranged that I should call for Mr. Taylor, at the Lasky studio, about 10 o'clock Thursday morning...Mr. Taylor was to go with me to the Vitagraph studio, on a matter of personal business." [40]

#49. (61) The career of Julia Crawford Ivers peaked prior to the Taylor murder, and went almost straight downhill after his death. [41]

#50. (65) A CAST OF KILLERS has scrambled the details of Taylor's military career. In reality Taylor went from Nova Scotia to England, where he received an officer's commission and was assigned to the Royal Army Service Corps. He was more than just a "temporary lieutenant." [42]

#51. (65) Taylor was in uniform for approximately 9 months, not 15 months. He reported for active duty in August 1918 and returned in May 1919. [43]

#52. (66) There is no big mystery as to why Taylor enlisted so late in the war. The following local newspaper item appeared in the month before Taylor signed his enlistment papers:

A move was started here yesterday by several patriotic Britishers, headed by Sergt. Howard Allen of the local British recruiting office and Dr. A. D. Houghton of the Receiving Hospital staff, to compel all Britons between the ages of 18 and 50 to enlist for service abroad. This movement, according to Dr. Houghton, will be aided by the American Protective League, its object being to round up every

available man in this community. It was stated that there are between 2000 and 3000 British subjects here and every one, except such as are supporting dependents, will be pressed into service...

A special canvass of the movie camps is to be made...[44]

Taylor's enlistment was probably a result of this recruiting drive.

#53. (68) The photograph of Taylor and the three army buddies was printed in the L.A. TIMES, along with another photo of the same individuals.[45] If one of them had been Denis, surely his wife would have recognized him. When the photograph was printed in the SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, the soldiers were all identified (and one of them was interviewed). The name of the soldier who allegedly looks like Denis, is Sgt. Hawkins.[46]

#54. (71) No six-page photo spread announcing the birth of Realart appears in any issue of PHOTOPLAY. An ad such as the one described would have appeared in a trade paper, not a fan magazine.

#55. (71) Ads for the birth of Realart did not appear until mid-1919.

#56. (72) "Huckleberry Finn" was the first film directed by Taylor after his return from military service and was filmed prior to "Anne of Green Gables," though "Anne" was released to theaters first.[47]

#57. (72) There was indeed a public explanation given as to why the team of Minter and Taylor was broken up: Taylor was promoted. In the film industry at that time, there could be only one "star" in any film, whether actor or director. At the end of 1919 Taylor was promoted, given his own producing unit and given "the name above the title." Taylor and Minter could not both have top billing in the same film, yet each of their contracts now required top billing. Hence, their professional separation:

William D. Taylor, one of the screen's best known and most artistic directors and before that a prominent and successful doer of things

theatric, has signed a new contract with Famous Players-Lasky whereby he will make his own productions for the Paramount-Artcraft program, beginning this month.

Films directed and produced by Taylor will be trademarked "William D. Taylor Productions" and will be given the same prominence and publicity that now is given those of Cecil B. De Mille.

At present Mr. Taylor is directing Mary Miles Minter. He has directed several of the silver sheet's most famous stars.[48]

#58. (74) It is stated that Taylor did not move into the Alvarado bungalow until summer of 1920. But press items indicated Taylor moved there immediately after his return from military service in May 1919.

LOS ANGELES RECORD (May 30, 1919): Since returning to Los Angeles, William D. Taylor, the director, who spent a strenuous year on the other side as a captain in the British army, has rented himself a bungalow and is settling down to the grind of directing feature pictures for the Morosco studios.

#59. (74) It is stated that Taylor moved into the bungalow on the recommendation of Douglas MacLean. But press items indicated that the bungalow was found for him by his fiancée, Neva Gerber:

"Mr. Taylor used to depend on me to look after many things for him. It was I who found the house for him in which he was living at the time of his death, and when he and I were engaged and were going out together I would frequently stop there for a few minutes, but there was always a servant present."[49]

#60. (75) ROUND THE ROOM does not state that Taylor's car which was stolen by Sands was a Packard. Press items published after the murder indicated that the wrecked car was repaired and repainted, and was in Taylor's possession at the time of his death.[50] The two automobiles in his estate were a McFarlan and a Chandler. It had to be one of these two cars

which was stolen by Sands, and was undoubtedly the very expensive McFarlan.[51]

#61. (75) Although the merchandise stolen by Sands was pawned under the name of William Deane Tanner, there is no mention in the early press reports that the envelope sent to Taylor was addressed that way.

#62. (88) Peavey testified at the inquest that he always left and entered Taylor's residence by the front door, not the back (kitchen) door. Before he left each evening he would fasten a latch on the back door and leave a key in the lock, preventing outside entry through the back door.

#63. (88) If Taylor's cigarette case had been stolen by Sands and been missing for "many months," how could it possibly be a Christmas gift from Mabel Normand inscribed "Christmas 1921"? There were less than two months between Christmas 1921 and the murder. Sands' last robbery was on December 4, 1921, three weeks PRIOR to Christmas.

#64. (88) On the day Taylor was killed, James Kirkwood was on board the ship Aquitania, en route from Europe to New York. He was not in Los Angeles, or even in the United States.[52]

#65. (89) According to Antonio Moreno's statements to the press, he had been trying to get in touch with Taylor for two days, finally contacting him by telephone around 7:00 p.m. on the night of the murder. It therefore appears he did not meet with Taylor at the Athletic Club on the morning of that day.[53]

#66. (89) On the day Taylor was killed, C. B. De Mille was on board the ship Aquitania, en route from Europe to New York. He was not in Los Angeles:

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH (February 4, 1922): Cecil B. De Mille, connected with the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, who has been abroad on a

vacation, returned yesterday on the Aquitania of the Cunard Line.

Mr. De Mille is suffering from rheumatism and was carried from the steamship on a stretcher, with his left arm and right leg bandaged, and placed in an ambulance and taken to his suite in the Ambassador. Mrs. De Mille met her husband at the pier, as did Adolph Zukor, motion picture owner.

Asked about William Desmond Taylor, director of the Famous Players-Lasky studios who was shot dead in his home in Los Angeles, Mr. De Mille said he had worked with Mr. Taylor about four years, before and after the war...

"He was a charming man," said Mr. De Mille. "There was none cleaner in the motion picture industry." Mr. De Mille frowned on rumors that association with women might have brought about the murder.

And:

Cecil De Mille's illness has been wildly rumored to be decidedly serious. We are glad to report James Kirkwood's comments upon the tale.

Mr. Kirkwood returned from Europe on the same steamer with Mr. De Mille and spent nearly every afternoon during the voyage with him. He says he marvels at Mr. De Mille's courage and poise in the midst of his affliction.

In Paris the physicians warned Mr. De Mille against making the trip at this time, but the director insisted that he must return to Hollywood. So, in the face of their forebodings and well-nigh helpless from rheumatism, he started homeward.

"It was marvelous to sit and talk with the man," said Kirkwood. "Sick and utterly worn out, he maintained the same charm of the host that he did in his days of health in California. It was superb bravery." [54]

#67. (89) Two weeks prior to Taylor's death, Julia Crawford Ivers began a

three-month leave of absence away from Paramount. She had been given the assignment of writing the scenario for a Constance Talmadge film, and was working at United Studios for Joseph Schenck:

Los Angeles, Jan. 16--Mrs. Julia Crawford Ivers, special writer and supervising director on the Paramount staff, closed her desk at the Lasky studio Saturday and moved her script case over to the United Studios where she is to be with the Constance Talmadge unit under the management of Joseph Schenck. This association is but a temporary one, however, Mr. Lasky having granted Mrs. Ivers a leave of absence for three months to permit her to do some special scripts for Miss Talmadge. At the end of that time she is due back on the Lasky lot.[55]

And:

Los Angeles, Jan. 30--Mrs. Julia Crawford Ivers, who is filling a special writing engagement with the Constance Talmadge unit, by arrangement with the Lasky studios, is working overtime these days on the adaptation and continuity of her original comedy "Our Fiancee." this is to serve for a coming Connie Talmadge, production, having been written by Mrs. Ivers expressly for Connie.[56]

#68. (89) Prior to Taylor's murder, Mary Miles Minter was not "all washed up, a has-been." According to Jesse Lasky, the Minter pictures cost \$100,000 to produce and grossed \$200,000.[57] It's certainly true that Minter did not develop into the Pickford-magnitude star that Paramount had hoped she would become, but she was still a successful member of Paramount's stellar stable at that time.

#69. (90) At the First National Bank, Taylor did not deposit \$2300 in cash. The most reliable press reports state that the deposit was in the form of checks, including two \$800 paychecks.

It had been taken for granted by the police, positive statements to this effect having been made, that Taylor drew \$2500 from the First

National Bank on January 31 and made a deposit of that sum or of \$2350 on February 1. He was killed on the night of February 1.

It was disclosed yesterday that he had not withdrawn any considerable sum from the bank, at least within two weeks of the date of his slaying and that his deposit of that day included four items, viz., two checks for \$800 each on the Merchants National Bank, one check for \$600 and one for \$150 on the Citizens National.

The two \$800 checks were explained yesterday by Mr. Eyton: they were for salary. While the other checks have not been investigated it is assumed for the present that they represent dividends Taylor received from stock held by him...

"Mr. Taylor evidently had held a pay check for a week," said Mr. Eyton last night, "which accounts for two checks having been deposited. I might explain that his contract called for a salary of \$1200 a week, but when the let-down in the motion picture business came he voluntarily offered to accept one-third less than the amount he might have collected." [58]

#70. (90) According to Mabel Normand's official statement to the D.A., her maid told her Taylor had sent his chauffeur over with a book from Parker's (not Fowler's), and had also made a book purchase at Robinsons for her to pick up at his place. [59] In her lengthy LIBERTY interview, Mabel stated that the two books she picked up from Taylor were ROSA MUNDI and a commentary on Nietzsche. [60] She also mentioned ROSA MUNDI in an interview published in the L. A. EXAMINER. [61] The employees of C. C. Parker's Bookstore were interviewed after the murder; they remembered Taylor and his purchase, THE HOME BOOK OF VERSE. [62] Clearly this was the book sent to Mabel's home by his chauffeur, while the two books from Robinsons were the books she picked up at his place. She explicitly denied receiving a volume of Freud from Taylor at that time. [63] Where did Freud come from? The answer is easy to deduce. In her LIBERTY interview, Mabel says she had her volume of Freud with her when she visited Taylor. Mabel's initial press

interviews, made on the day the body was discovered, did not name the books Taylor had given her; but she did mention Taylor's joke when he took her to her car and saw the POLICE GAZETTE there--he jokingly contrasted the POLICE GAZETTE with the volume of Freud. The reporters naturally assumed that the volume of Freud had been just given to her by Taylor, and a few of them reported it that way--they were clearly wrong.

#71. (90) Taylor did not meet with Berger in his home at 6:15 p.m. According to press reports, Taylor met with Berger in her office between approximately 2:00 and 4:00 p.m.[64] Taylor and Berger later spoke by telephone. The LOS ANGELES EXAMINER interviewed Berger and reported that her phone conversation with Taylor took place between 5:30 and 6:30.[65]

#72. (90) Many of the events of Taylor's "last day" as described in A CAST OF KILLERS, are inaccurate. He did not spend most of the day at the studio; he only spent a little time there on that day.[66]

#73. (90) It is stated that on the day of his death Taylor took tango lessons from a young man at a dance class. But according to the LOS ANGELES TIMES, the dance class he attended was at the Payne Dancing Academy, and his regular dancing instructor, Mrs. Waybright, gave him his lesson:

"He was just brushing up on some of the old steps," Mrs. Waybright stated last night. "He had always taken private lessons. His previous lesson was taken on the preceding Monday night. On Wednesday night [Feb. 1] I noticed nothing unusual about his actions. He was as jolly, though quiet and reticent to talk, as on his preceding visits. He never discussed his personal affairs with me while we danced. We only talked of his progress in dancing. Had there been any worry on his mind on his last visit I would have noticed it.

"He had completed one course, and before his departure purchased a new set of tickets. He said he wanted to take up a tango step the following evening, which would have been Thursday. He added that he

possibly would be sent on location Thursday, and that if he did not appear that evening he would surely come back on Friday."[67]

#74. (100) Taylor's last production was not "The Top of New York." "The Green Temptation" was the last film Taylor made, even though "The Top of New York" was released to theaters last.[68]

#75. (107) It is stated that when D. W. Griffith took his troupe of Biograph film players to California he left Mabel Normand behind in New York. On the contrary, the filmography in MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS pp. 287-289, shows that Mabel indeed accompanied them to California. The biography of Mabel Normand written in 1929 by Harry Carr also stated that Mabel went to California with Biograph.[69]

#76. (108) May "Busch," not May "Bush."

#77. (108) Mabel Normand had already been working for Goldwyn for over a year when "Mickey" was released in August 1918. She already was a "full-fledged star," though "Mickey" was indeed her most successful film.

#78. (109) Mabel Normand never went to Europe during her Goldwyn years; her first European trip took place after Taylor's murder.[70] No fan magazines or newspapers during her Goldwyn years reported that she was in Europe.

#79. (109) It is stated that "Molly O", Mabel Normand's 1921 film, was a disaster at the box office. But in Sennett's autobiography he states that the film was financially successful.[71] Contemporary newspaper reports indicated that the film played for six weeks in Los Angeles, reportedly attracting 100,000 patrons during that time.[72] Cinema historian John Kobal referred to "Molly O" as Mabel's "last great success." [73]

#80. (110) It is stated that Normand and Cody kept separate residences from the time they were married in 1926 until her death in 1930. But in December 1927 it was announced that they would no longer keep separate residences, but would live together in Mabel's house in Beverly Hills.[74]

#81. (111) It is implied that Mabel Normand's death was largely caused by narcotics. But the material in MABEL (pp. 218-230) shows that she truly died of tuberculosis, and that it was a lingering, horrible death. After her death, one press item stated: "Miss Normand died at the Pottinger sanitarium, Monrovia, early Saturday morning, after waging a losing battle for over a year against tuberculosis...Miss Normand had wasted away until she weighed scarcely 50 pounds at the time of her death."[75]

#82. (114) None of the newspapers published in the week after the murder reported that Mabel had been searching for her letters at the bungalow when the police arrived at the murder scene. Those fanciful reports came later.

#83. (116) In her official statement to the district attorney, Mabel stated that did not know who was on the phone with Taylor when she arrived: "No, I don't know to whom he was talking."[76] The press also indicated that she did not know to whom Taylor had been talking.[77] There was one solitary early interview which quoted her as stating it was Berger, but that statement is clearly "enhanced." Peavey is also quoted in that same paper as stating that Berger had telephoned before Mabel's arrival, and the reporter had obviously interpolated the information into Mabel's interview, since the reporters present from the other papers made no mention of it. The LOS ANGELES EXAMINER interviewed Berger and reported that her phone conversation with Taylor took place between 5:30 and 6:30.[78] Antonio Moreno's statement indicated his phone call with Taylor took place at 7:00, which is when Mabel arrived. So the press evidence indicates Taylor was talking with Moreno, not Berger, when Mabel arrived. Ed King also stated the call was with Moreno.[79]

#84. (116) Taylor's alleged premonition did appear in one early press report, but the statement was clearly fabricated. As soon as the report appeared, Mabel gave an interview explicitly denying it:

"I wish to deny also the statement attributed to me that Mr. Taylor had told me of premonition of his death," added Miss Normand. "I never heard him mention any fear for his life or fear of any person or persons." [80]

#85. (117) Sennett was not with Mabel Normand on the morning after the murder. He sent his studio manager, John Waldron to handle the situation. [81] Sennett went into seclusion and did not emerge in public for two weeks.

#86. (118) Regarding Mabel Normand's injuries in 1915, A CAST OF KILLERS reportedly quotes Minta Durfee as stating that Mabel was not injured by a vase thrown by Mae Busch, but rather by jumping off a pier. There were a number of different published accounts of Mabel's injuries. That Mabel was injured by the thrown vase was elsewhere directly asserted several times by Minta Durfee herself, who once stated:

...the vase that was over the fireplace, suddenly went flying through the room, down the corridor, right to Mabel's forehead. It was a direct hit, but Mabel, before she fell to the floor, was able to see the person who threw it with such deadly accuracy: a lady in a flimsy black negligee--Mae Busch. [82]

Two 1922 accounts of Mabel's injuries were previously published in TAYLOROLOGY. In Wallace Smith's account, Mabel found Mack with a woman and another couple; Mabel attacked Mack, and the other man broke a beer bottle over Mabel's head. [83] In Ed Roberts' account, Mabel attacked Mae; during the catfight Mae gained the upper hand and bashed Mabel's head repeatedly against a wooden window casing. [84] The pier-jumping account seems to have originated from Adela Rogers St. Johns. [85]

#87. (122) It is stated that Claire Windsor went with Taylor to the Ambassador Hotel, where they met Antonio Moreno and James Kirkwood, on the Saturday before Taylor's death. As mentioned above, Kirkwood was not even in the U.S.A. at that time. Also, in interviews given shortly after the murder, Claire Windsor stated that she had only been out with Taylor this once, and she and Moreno both stated that this evening at the Ambassador hotel took place on the previous Thursday, not Saturday.[86] A CAST OF KILLERS indicates that the evening concluded with Taylor and Moreno going off together, and Claire Windsor had to get a ride home with Mabel. But in interviews given after the murder Moreno stated that he saw Taylor and Claire Windsor leave the hotel together[87], and other interviews stated that Moreno had escorted Betty Francisco to and from this event.[88] Moreno did state that he had indeed been with Taylor on that Saturday, in the L. A. Athletic Club, along with Arthur Hoyt and Capt. Robertson; but Moreno stated that Taylor, Hoyt and Robertson left together without him because Moreno had a dinner engagement elsewhere.[89] So there are many discrepancies here when comparing A CAST OF KILLERS with the statements made by Claire Windsor, Antonio Moreno, and Betty Francisco a few days after the murder.

#88. (122) Mary Miles Minter played in "The Littlest Rebel" in Chicago in 1911 and 1912, but not in 1914.

#89. (128) It is stated that in 1914, at the age of 11, Mary Miles Minter (Juliet Reilly) assumed the identity of the real Mary Miles Minter, who had died eight years earlier at the age of eight, so that she could pass herself off as being 16 years old and thus not get in trouble with child labor laws in Chicago. But in a 1923 interview, Minter says this happened several years earlier:

"When I was eight years old I was passed off for 16, twice my age, and dressed as a midget, with high heels and long skirts, so that I could play the stellar role of 'The Littlest Rebel' at the Chicago Opera

house. That was because the state law of Illinois prohibited children under 16 years of age from appearing as professional performers." [90]

So which is correct? Did this happen when Minter was eight, or when she was 11? Both accounts agree that she was passed off for 16, so everything depends on when the real Mary Miles Minter died. One month after the birth of Juliet Reilly in April 1902, the SHREVEPORT TIMES reported the following:

Mansfield, La., May 22--Mary, the 8-year-old daughter of Mr. Fayette Minter, of Eastpoint, was buried by the side of her mother here this morning. The remains were accompanied by Mr. Minter, Mr. W. F. Scarbrough and Mr. Wm. Gray...

Mesdames Julia Miles and J. Homer Reilly, of Shreveport, were visitors this morning. [91]

As this item indicates that the real (deceased) Mary Miles Minter was eight years older than Juliet Reilly, then if Juliet Reilly assumed the identity of Mary Miles Minter at the age of eight that would indeed make her appear to be legally 16. So Minter's version, pretending to be 16 at age eight, is supported by this documentary evidence. Since Charlotte Shelby was obviously in town to attend the funeral that morning, it's no wonder that the identity switch (Juliet Reilly to Mary Miles Minter) occurred to her eight years later. However, Minter's appearance in "The Littlest Rebel" at the Chicago Opera House actually took place in 1911, when Minter was 9 years old. [92]

#90. (129) There were many divergent accounts of how and when Taylor and Minter first met. James Kirkwood later stated he introduced them to each other on the American lot. [93] There were a number of social events where Taylor and Minter were both present, such as the Motion Picture Directors Association Thanksgiving Ball in 1916. [94] But from the written statement made by Minter in August 1923 it is clear that she did not remember any meetings which had taken place before the filming of ANNE OF GREEN GABLES in 1919: "William Desmond Taylor came into my life when I was 17 years of age..." [95] (Minter turned 17 in April 1919.)

#91. (129-30) Regarding Minter's contract with American Film, it is stated that Charlotte Shelby got out of the contract due to a legal loophole, and then signed with Paramount. But the material in TAYLORLOGY 9 indicates that although Minter did not work during the last two months of her final two-year contract with American Film, which was signed in April 1917, that contract was indeed completed before she signed with Realart on June 17, 1919.

#92. (130) It is stated that the Shelby family moved from the home on Fremont to the home on Hobart, and then later to the home at 7th & New Hampshire (known as Casa Margarita). But this sequence is wrong. The family moved into the Mathewson house on Fremont in late 1919, signing an 18-month lease.[96] The lease was not completed because the Mathewson house was sold in late 1920, so the Shelby family spent a few months at the Ambassador hotel. Then they moved to Casa Margarita (which was known as the Duque house at the time they moved in) in April 1921[97]. They did not move into the house on Hobart until Fall 1921--they were there from Fall 1921 to Spring 1922 while renovation work was underway at Casa Margarita.[98]

#93. (130) It is stated that the home at 2039 North Hobart was "down the road from Mabel Normand." But Mabel Normand lived at 3089 West Seventh Street, at the corner of 7th and Vermont, which was not down the road from the home on Hobart.[99] Mabel Normand lived down the road from Casa Margarita, not the home on Hobart.

#94. (131) It is stated that Mary's final film contract was terminated on April 25, 1923. But in her lawsuit filed against her mother, it was stated that Mary's contract ended on January 27, 1923.[100]

#95. (131) It is stated that "Paramount paid off the rest of her contract for \$350,000..." That figure does not seem credible. Contemporary press

items stated nothing about Minter's contract being "paid off", only that the 30-month contract had been completed and would not be renewed.[101] Minter's original contract was for 30 months, 20 films, \$1,300,000. The 30 months had been fully completed, and she had done 18 films. There were only two films still due on the original contract when it was terminated; why would they have paid \$350,000 (over 25% of the total contract) to pay off the last two films (10% of the total contract)? Another indication that the \$350,000 figure is unreasonable is in the lawsuit filed against her mother, stating that between April 1, 1920 (when she turned 18) and January 23, 1923 (when the contract terminated) Shelby had received \$700,000 of Minter's money from the studio.

#96. (131) It is stated that Carl Stockdale had starred in one of Mary's early Paramount pictures. Stockdale had played supporting roles in several of Mary's movies made for American Film, but was not in any of her Paramount films.

#97. (131) Margaret died in 1939, not 1937. The date is correctly given later in the book.

#98. (131) It is stated that Mary Miles Minter made six more pictures after the Taylor murder. But Minter only made four more pictures after the murder: "South of Suva," "Drums of Fate," "The Cowboy and the Lady," and "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine." All her other pictures had been completed before the murder.

#99. (136) The AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE CATALOG, FEATURE FILMS: 1911-1920, does not indicate that Florence Vidor appeared in any films with Mary Miles Minter.

#100. (142) In 1937, Faith MacLean "partially identified" Carl Stockdale as having been the person she saw leaving Taylor's home after the shot was

fired.[102] This directly contradicts the report that she was certain the person was Charlotte Shelby.

#101. (144) Ike St. Johns was secretary and campaign manager for Mayor Meredith Snyder, but Snyder lost his bid for re-election in 1921. At the time of the Taylor murder, George Cryer was Mayor. A few months prior to the murder, Ike St. Johns was reportedly called as a Grand Jury witness to testify about political corruption in the Snyder administration.[103] Ike St. Johns was not working for the Mayor's office at the time of the murder.

#102. (Photo insert) The photograph identified as the coroner's photograph of Taylor is not Taylor--no coroner's photograph of Taylor was taken. That photograph is actually the suicide victim in Connecticut who was at one time rumored to be Sands. On March 7, 1922 the HARTFORD COURANT printed this very same photo and said it was the coroner's photo of the local suicide victim. There was some speculation that the unidentified victim might be Sands, and the next day the COURANT reported that a copy of the photo was being sent to the Los Angeles authorities to determine whether or not the individual was indeed Sands. So although this photo was in the police file of the Taylor case, it is not a photo of Taylor.

#103. (Photo insert) Taylor's funeral was held on February 7, 1922, not February 8, as any contemporary newspaper accounts will verify.

#104. (Photo insert) The "I love you" letter shown in A CAST OF KILLERS is a forgery. A photograph of the genuine letter was printed in the press shortly after the murder; the wording is the same, but the monogram, layout and handwriting is different.[104] The handwriting on the real letter is identical with Minter's handwriting which appears on the photograph of hers which was found in Taylor's bungalow.[105]

#105. Photo insert) The photograph identified as Faith MacLean is not

Faith MacLean, but rather a photo of Kathlyn Williams (Mrs. Charles Eyton)--she signed Taylor's death certificate identifying the body.[106]

#106. (Photo insert) The woman identified as Mary Miles Minter, in the film still with King Vidor, is not Minter.

#107. (Photo insert) One photo is identified as "William Desmond Taylor and Mary Pickford, 1919," but according to Robert Birchard the man in the photo is not Taylor--this was a publicity photo taken for the film "Amarilly of Clothesline Alley," and the man was a Canadian officer. That film was made and released in 1918, before Taylor even entered the British (not Canadian) army. Also, the man in the picture has a mustache, and no accounts indicated Taylor ever grew a mustache during his Army years, or during the years of his film career.

#108. (Photo insert) One photograph of the Shelby-Minter family is identified as having been taken at Casa de Margarita "c. 1919," but the family did not move into Casa de Margarita until April 1921.[107] In 1919 the family lived in Santa Barbara (while her contract with American Film was concluding), then on Fifth Avenue in New York (while competing producers were trying to outbid each other for a contract with Minter), and, at year's end, in the Mathewson house at 56 Fremont in Los Angeles.

#109. (Photo insert) The photograph identified as "Sands" is actually Harry Fellows. Sands was NEVER Taylor's chauffeur, he was Taylor's valet/cook. The photograph on the dust jacket was indeed published and erroneously identified as Sands, but the next day:

The photograph of Taylor and a man thought to be Edward F. Sands which appeared in yesterday's EXAMINER was identified as that of Harry Fellows in company with the slain director. Fellows, an assistant director, declared the picture was taken some time ago.[108]

Harry Fellows was Taylor's chauffeur before becoming his assistant director.

When Taylor bought his new expensive McFarlan late in 1920, several photos were taken with Taylor in the car, and a few of them had Harry Fellows behind the wheel. (Harry Fellows should not be confused with his brother, Howard Fellows, who was chauffeur at the time of Taylor's death.)[109]

#110. (149, 153) Mary Miles Minter described a gas station robbery in Taylor's neighborhood by three youths on the night Taylor was killed; the book implies no such robbery actually took place. Although not as close as Mary claimed, the following reported robbery was still within walking distance of Taylor's residence:

[After giving the details of a robbery that took place at 10 p.m. on the night of the murder] ...Earlier in the evening...three bandits held up an oil filling station at 601 South Catalina Street and robbed William Barer, the manager, of \$100.[110]

#111. (164) It is stated that published reports indicated Taylor's front door was unlocked when Peavey arrived. On the contrary, the early press reports stated: "The door, which has a night latch, was locked from the outside, but the latch was set so that no key was necessary to accomplish this."[111]

#112. (164) The book indicates that as soon as Peavey discovered the body, the landlord was next to enter, followed immediately by Douglas MacLean. But in Douglas MacLean's official statement, he said that he was in bed when he heard Peavey yelling that Taylor was dead. MacLean said he got dressed first and then went to Taylor's house; when he got there the house was already full of people:

"In the morning I heard someone screaming in the court. At first it was just a lot of jumbled noise. We sat bolt upright in bed and listened...I hurried into my clothes and went over to Mr. Taylor's house. It was full of people."[112]

#113. (164) Douglas MacLean did not live in the bungalow directly opposite Taylor. He lived in #406-B, which was the bungalow at right angles to Taylor's. MacLean's bungalow faced Alvarado.[113] The book's diagram is likewise in error regarding the location of the MacLean residence.

#114. (164) The book reports that Jessurun [sic] and MacLean stated to the police that Taylor's body was found with one arm extended--the body was not "laid out." But Jessurun later returned to the scene with Woolwine and a posed photo was taken in the exact position he purportedly first saw the body. Both arms were at Taylor's sides.[114] Douglas MacLean stated, in his own official statement:

"...He was lying flat on his back, his feet separated a little, his hands at his side, perfectly flat on his back. I said to Mrs. MacLean, later on, 'He looked just like a dummy in a department store, so perfect, so immaculate.'"[115]

#115. (165) Neal Harrington is identified as a "resident of a building across the street," but press items indicated that Harrington was staying with Verne Dumas in apartment 408-A of Taylor's apartment complex.[116]

#116. (167) It is stated that after the first policeman (Ziegler) arrived at the death scene at 8:00 a.m., no reporters were allowed inside Taylor's home. But in his autobiography, reporter Frank Bartholomew of United Press states he arrived at the scene the same time as the deputy coroner and that "roaming the house," Bartholomew went upstairs and personally saw the nightgown.[117]

#117. (168) The statement that Taylor had keys which fit no known locks did not originate from the police but from the person in charge of administering Taylor's estate:

In an effort to locate William Desmond Taylor's lost will Public Administrator Frank Bryson Friday began a search of safety deposit

boxes in Los Angeles' 100 banks and bank branches. "I have some of Taylor's keys," Bryson said, "but I don't know what they fit." The keys were tried out on several safety deposit boxes in downtown banks Thursday but found not to fit.[118]

#118. (168) The coroner's report states that the bullet

"...passed out of the chest on the right side of the middle line, posterior to the right collar bone [behind the collar bone], and entered the tissues of the neck..."[119]

The bullet did not actually strike the collar bone.

#119. (169) By the time Mary arrived, the "EXTRA" newspapers may have indeed been on the streets. A telegram had been sent at 10:08 a.m. which referred to newspaper accounts of the killing.[120] Mary later stated it was around 11:00 a.m. when she was notified by her mother that Taylor had been killed.[121]

#120. (169) It is stated that Captain Adams allowed Mary Miles Minter to enter Taylor's bungalow when she arrived at the murder scene on the morning Taylor's body was found. But Peavey's official statement indicates Mary did not go inside.[122] In Mary's own statements to the press, she also makes no mention of going inside the building--as soon as she learns Taylor's body has already been taken to the undertakers she immediately leaves and goes there.[123]

#121. (169) Minter's presence at the bungalow that morning was indeed reported in several local papers and by several wire services. The LOS ANGELES RECORD even quoted her comments at the scene:

Tears streaming down her pretty face, Mary Miles Minter, famous motion picture star, hurried to the door of the Taylor bungalow at noon today and asked brokenly:

"It isn't true, is it?"

"Taylor is dead," said Detective Sergeant H. J. Wallis.

"Oh, my God, I can't believe it," Miss Minter cried with a gesture of despair.

She turned in her grief to her mother [grandmother], who had accompanied her to the bungalow court in her automobile.

"And I saw him only yesterday," she said. "His car passed mine at Seventh and Alvarado---it was the first time I knew it was gray."

...The star cried and offered to do anything she could to aid police in solving the mystery.[124]

#122. (170) The existence of the blonde hairs found on Taylor was initially kept quiet by the police. But in 1926 the briefcase belonging to District Attorney Asa Keyes was stolen by Hearst reporters, and the existence of the hairs became widespread public knowledge. The banner headline from the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER on March 26, 1926 was: BLONDE HAIRS CLEW IN TAYLOR CASE.[125] Additional publicity was given to the blonde hairs in 1930 by Edward King.[126]

#123. (173) The rumor that the police found a closet full of women's underwear did not originate from the studios. The rumor grew from statements made by Earl Tiffany and Henry Peavey:

From former employees of Mr. Taylor it was learned that silken things unknown in a man's wardrobe were among the effects of Mr. Taylor. That the police found evidence of this was learned for the first time yesterday, following the stories related by two former employees.

Henry Peavey, the houseman who discovered the body last Thursday morning, declared he had seen at least one pink silk nightgown there.

In connection with this, it also was learned yesterday how Edward F. Sands, former secretary, accused robber and forger and now being sought as a material witness in the murder case, spied on his employer while working for Mr. Taylor.

Sands related his observations to Earl Tiffany, former chauffeur for Mr. Taylor, so Mr. Tiffany says. He observed silken things of pink hue in the upstairs rooms of the expensively appointed apartment. His curiosity was aroused.

So Sands folded the garments in a trick manner, according to the story related by Mr. Tiffany, who was employed at the same time as was Sands. The result of the servant's trap were that became convinced the garments were not merely kept there for sentimental reasons. He paid particular attention to the visitors to the Taylor home, it was declared, and drew his own conclusion.

Peavey stated last night he remembered seeing at least one pink nightgown.[127]

The stories of a supposed closet full of women's lingerie did not come until many years later when sensationalist publications sought to "spice up" this original item.

#124. (175) Denis Deane Tanner had indeed been an employee of Taylor's. But after Taylor deserted his wife, Denis went to work for another store across town.[128]

#125. (175) It is stated that Taylor was best man at the wedding of Denis and Ada Tanner in 1907. But in her statements to the press, Ada said that the first time she met Taylor was after the birth of her first child in 1908.[129]

#126. (176) The police did not feel obliged to comment on all the wild stories which were appearing in print after the murder. But they did discredit the theory that Sands and Denis were the same person:

Detectives ridiculed a theory advanced today that Sands may have been Dennis Tanner... Tanner, if alive, would be considerably more than 40, it was said, while Sands' age is 25.[130]

And years later, when the theory resurfaced, District Attorney Buron Fitts

stated:

"...the [finger]prints of [Denis] Deane-Tanner and Sands are definitely of two different men." [131]

The handwriting of Sands and Denis Tanner were also compared and found to be totally different. [132]

#127. (181) No early published accounts made any statement to the effect that Taylor had met with Berger in his bungalow on the day he was killed.

#128. (177) The estimate of Taylor's 1922 financial worth as \$1.5 million (adjusted for inflation to 1967) seems quite unrealistic. The total value of Taylor's estate, as inherited by his daughter (his sole heir) was \$18,733. [133]

#129. (179) It is stated that on the last day of his life, February 1, Taylor ordered flowers for both Mary Miles Minter and Mabel Normand. But according to the probate papers, Taylor's last order with his regular florist, S. Murata & Company, was placed on January 31.

#130. (181) Berger met with Taylor at her office in the AFTERNOON, when Shelby reportedly called looking for Mary. Mary claimed to have been home reading a book in the EVENING. These are two different periods of time. Taylor reportedly left Berger's office around 4:00 p.m. [134]

#131. (184) The question is raised as to why, in the year following the murder, Minter was only questioned once. Yet, earlier in A CAST OF KILLERS on p. 169 it is stated that she was questioned at the scene by Captain Adams who indicated she had an acceptable alibi for her whereabouts the previous evening. Press reports also indicated she was questioned again on February 4:

Late last night Detective Captain Adams, after a three hours conference with Mary Miles Minter, issued an official statement in

which he said, "Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill, together with myself, interviewed Miss Minter. We talked with her several hours regarding her relations with Taylor. We are absolutely satisfied that Miss Minter knows nothing that will throw any light at all on this mystery nor do we believe that she is even remotely connected with the case." [135]

It was also reported that detectives King and Winn questioned Minter. [136] So although her session with William Doran on February 7 was the only time a stenographer took Minter's statement verbatim, there were certainly other instances when she was questioned by the investigators.

#132. (183-4) It is implied that no attempt was made to question Charlotte Shelby in the year following the murder. On the contrary, Detectives King and Winn attempted to question her, but she refused to talk to them:

After questioning Miss Minter, we went to the home of her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, to question her regarding any knowledge she might have of the mystery.

Mrs. Shelby was preparing to leave for New York on the 6:00 o'clock train. When I requested an interview, she came to the door, fastening her dress. She informed me coldly that her attorneys, Mr. Mott and Mr. Cassill, were in the house for the purpose of answering questions, and that she was in too much of a hurry to reach New York to devote any time to an investigation about which she knew nothing. [137]

#133. (184) In 1926 Charlotte Shelby was not "declared innocent without a trial" and "officially exonerated from blame." In 1929, Shelby issued a written statement recalling the 1926 meeting with Keyes:

"...My attorney and I invited his questioning me, thereupon demanding a statement vindicating me. His statement was promised within three days, but I was unable to get this satisfaction." [138]

And Keyes, referring to the 1926 episode, replied:

"I exonerated no one in the case and refused to do so until the guilty person was arrested and prosecuted." [139]

#134. (184) The book states that the police knew more about Taylor and Minter's relationship than even the most muckraking of journalists had suspected. But the "muckraking journals" suspected and implied that Taylor and Minter had an extremely sexual relationship (which the presence of the purportedly initialed nightgown implied). If, as indicated in the book, the police had concluded Taylor and Minter had not made love, than this was less (not more) than the "muckraking journals" suspected.

#135. (187) Charlotte Whitney reportedly states that she had never been questioned by investigators on the case prior to 1925. Yet the LOS ANGELES TIMES did report that she had indeed been questioned shortly after the murder. [140]

#136. (188) Keyes did not wait four months after Charlotte Whitney's testimony before "deciding" to question Shelby. Shelby went to Louisiana for a court case (a relative was contesting the will of Shelby's mother, Julia Miles) [141] and then to New York; as soon as she returned to Los Angeles, Keyes did question her. Also, it is natural that Keyes would want to question Minter--who was potentially a star witness--prior to questioning Shelby; but Minter was in New York at that time, so a trip to New York had to be made in order for Keyes to first question Minter.

#137. (192) According to newspaper reports there were over 300 written confessions received within five weeks of the murder, not one year. [142] These press items were obviously enhanced--a much more plausible report stated that the 300 figure included letters from people who "know" who the murderer is; in other words, the 300 figure included tips, hunches and purported visions by psychics. [143] In his 1930 article detective Ed King stated that about a dozen persons had confessed to the murder. [144]

#138. (213) Cahill reportedly states that every time Mabel told her story of that evening she said that Taylor had "received" the telephone call; but in her official statement to the D.A. she makes no mention of whether Taylor made the call or received it--she only states that Taylor was talking on the phone when she arrived.[145] If Taylor was talking to Moreno, then the call was "made" and not "received," as Taylor was returning Moreno's earlier call.

#139. (213) Cahill reportedly states that it was very strange for Taylor's door to have been open when Mabel arrived; it was far too cold to have the door open. But in an interview Mabel stated:

"A peculiarity the director had was that he never closed his front door during the day and seldom at night..."[146]

Taylor's favorite sports were golf, hunting and camping; he may have had a touch of claustrophobia. In any event, it was Taylor's normal behavior to have his door open.

#140. (214) Mary Miles Minter was not present at Taylor's inquest; she was in seclusion.

#141. (216) The book implies that Eyton planted the nightgown in Taylor's bedroom on the morning the body was found in order to make the public believe that Taylor was quite a ladies' man. Yet reportedly Eyton, one of the few to actually see the nightgown, tried to discredit it:

[from an interview with Paramount executive Frank A. Garbutt]

"Take the pink nightgown for example. I have talked to Charles Eyton about it. He told me that he saw the nightgown at the house after the murder. He said it was in a box which he opened while going through Taylor's effects. He said that he barely glanced at the garment, but the thought flashed through his mind that it was something that Taylor had probably bought for his daughter."[147]

And Peavey told reporters that the nightgown had been there earlier:

Peavey contributed additional information regarding the night dress. When he entered Taylor's employ some six months ago, he said, he straightway began to put his master's room in order. Among several articles lying around he noticed a small flat green box; he found that it contain a pink silk garment--a woman's. It had a lace edging. He placed this in one of the bureau drawers, where it remained surviving even the two burglarious raids of Sands, his predecessor as Taylor's valet.[148]

#142. (216) Suppose the nightgown did have the "MMM" initials on it--how could it possibly have been planted by the studio? There was only a half hour between the time the body was discovered by Peavey and the time the police arrived. Someone in a position of authority like Eyton would have had to learn about the death, obtain a nightgown, have initials embroidered on it, go to the murder scene, and plant the nightgown, all within a half-hour. The top priority of the studio employees was to remove damaging items from the murder scene (correspondence, liquor, etc.) before the police arrived. There was no time to obtain, initialize, and plant a nightgown.

#143. (219) The book concludes that "obviously" there never was a mysterious doctor who stated Taylor died of a stomach hemorrhage. But Eyton told of the doctor, under oath, at the inquest; he volunteered the information, it was not given in response to a question. It is very doubtful that he would perjure himself unless he were asked a specific question to which he felt compelled to lie. Also, the doctor was mentioned in the official statement made by Douglas MacLean.[149] Naturally, once the doctor later learned of his mistaken diagnosis, he would not be anxious to step forward and identify himself as the incompetent doctor at the scene.

#144. (219) It is stated that Cato was totally convinced shortly after the murder that Sands had nothing to do with Taylor's killing. Yet in the

1929/30 flare-up of the case, the contrary was reported:

Captain Ray Cato, chief of the police homicide squad said yesterday that he still believed Sands was the murderer of Taylor.[150]

and two days later

...Captain E. Ray Cato, who was one of the investigators, likewise stated that all the police records point more strongly to Sands as the killer than to any other person.[151]

#145. (219-20) The press evidence leads to the conclusion that the suicide in Connecticut was not Sands. In 1926, Keyes took a coast-to-coast trip investigating several leads on the case. Upon his return it was reported:

...[Keyes] visited Bridgeport, Conn., where police told him that three years ago Captain Jim Bean of the Los Angeles police department had investigated the death of a man there thought at one time to have been Edward F. Sands, former valet to Taylor, and the suspected slayer. Bean at that time learned for certain that the man buried in Bridgeport was not Sands, and made a formal report.[152]

#146. (231) Chapter 32 of A CAST OF KILLERS, supposedly detailing the meeting between Vidor and Hopkins, is worded very strangely. During the meeting, "Vidor" launches a defamatory attack on Taylor's character and, from his conversation with Hopkins, Vidor supposedly concludes that: (a) Taylor was homosexual; (b) Taylor liked to molest young boys; (c) the room which Taylor rented for Peavey is where Taylor would molest the boys; (d) Peavey would solicit the young boys for Taylor; (e) Peavey's recent arrest in Westlake Park was for one such solicitation for Taylor. And yet Hopkins is quoted as saying NONE of that! "Vidor" pulls each theory out of the air and "Hopkins responded with an affirmative silence." "Hopkins raised his glass in salute." etc. All the defamatory confirmation is in "Vidor's" own head! (Kirkpatrick doesn't even have "Hopkins" nodding in agreement.) Assuming Kirkpatrick has accurately portrayed this meeting

between Hopkins and Vidor, it would appear Vidor is a true psychic--someone who can distinguish between an affirmative silence, a negative silence, and a noncommittal silence. That chapter's conclusions defy credulity. (In 1922, would someone use a black servant like Peavey--who was 40 years old and very big--to solicit young boys?) To brand Taylor as a molester of young boys on such flimsy and unsubstantiated theorizing is totally at odds with Taylor's character as revealed in the material published prior to his death, and with the published statements (and not silences) of those who knew him. When Mabel Normand was interviewed after Taylor's death, she recalled her last meeting with Taylor and said Taylor told her he would stand by Peavey if he were innocent of any wrongdoing, but if Peavey were guilty he would have to fire him.[153] Mabel also reportedly stated, "I begged that Billy wouldn't fire him [Peavey] on a rumor which might be false." [154] There is no reason to believe that Peavey's acts which led to his arrest were done on behalf of Taylor, or that Taylor even condoned those acts. And exactly what is it that Peavey is supposed to have done? In the earlier chapters of A CAST OF KILLERS it is just referred to as a "morals charge" (p. 7, 139, 176), even when discussing the contents of the police file on the murder. Los Angeles newspaper reports are vague, "asserted acts of indecency several days ago in Westlake Park"[155] or "charged with being lewd and dissolute"[156] or "social vagrancy." [157] Does Vidor/Kirkpatrick really have any grounds for his statement later in the book that the allegation was "soliciting young boys"? In A DEED OF DEATH, Giroux says the allegation was indecent exposure.[158] If Giroux is correct, then the charge might have been based on nothing more substantial than Peavey urinating behind a bush in the park (perhaps Peavey had previously experienced unpleasant racial confrontations in public restrooms), and a white policeman's desire to rid the park of "undesirable" individuals.

#147. (251) All of the legal material involving Charlotte Shelby was not filed under the name "Lily Pearl Miles." Most legal documents are under the name "Pearl Miles Reilly." Even her death certificate reads "Pearl Miles

Reilly AKA Charlotte Shelby."

#148. (251) Press evidence indicates the first Minter-Shelby lawsuit over the money earned by Mary was filed in 1925 and not three months after the murder.[159]

#149. (252) It is stated that beginning in 1922, Leslie Henry had, at Shelby's instructions, transferred sums from Minter's account to Shelby. But in Leslie Henry's testimony he stated that at that time he had no account whatsoever for Minter. Shelby herself testified that she had set up a small personal checking account for Minter, but everything else (cash, stocks and bonds) had been deposited in Shelby's own accounts: "I was not concerned about what belonged to me and what belonged to Mary." [160]

#150. (252) The book claims Les Henry stated that all his improper financial transactions were done with Shelby's knowledge and consent, but press evidence (including the letter from him reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 41) indicates Les Henry fully admitted to stealing the Shelby money.[161] He eventually pleaded guilty to ten felony counts of grand theft and forgery, admitting to robbing Shelby's account of over \$40,000.[162]

#151. (253) It is stated that Leslie Henry began working for Shelby in 1918. But in his testimony he stated he first did business with her in 1920.[163]

#152. (255) It is stated that Shelby "paid off" Asa Keyes to avoid prosecution. But that makes no sense. The testimony of Leslie Henry indicated that Shelby was very much afraid of being prosecuted by Keyes. (See TAYLOROLOGY 5 and 35.) Shelby fled to Europe in 1926 and remained there for over three years, not returning until Keyes was out of office and safely behind bars himself. Leslie Henry's testimony in TAYLOROLOGY 5 and 35 does not give any indication of a Keyes payoff; the opposite is implied--

that Shelby had had no previous dealings whatsoever with Keyes and she fled the country to escape his reach.

#153. (255) As stated earlier on p. 131, Mary's Paramount contract terminated in 1923, not 1922.

#154. (255) Mary did not move to New York until August 1924.[164] When her grandmother became ill in April 1925, she returned to Los Angeles and lived in Casa Margarita with the family for several months before returning to New York again.[165]

#155. (255) Regarding the lawsuit between Minter and Shelby, the book states that case had gone to trial and the judge was ready to hand down his decision when Minter and Shelby settled out of court, with Minter only receiving \$25,000. But press reports indicated that the case had not gone to trial, and that Minter and Shelby were both in Paris when they reconciled and settled out of court on January 24, 1927. Minter received \$150,000 in bonds plus ownership of Casa Margarita.[166] Press reports also indicated that a \$100,000 trust fund had previously been set up for Minter, on July 22, 1924.[167]

#156. (257) Press evidence indicates Mary did not arrive in Los Angeles three hours after Julia Miles had died; Mary was making preparations to leave for Los Angeles when word of her grandmother's death came. Shelby ordered a quick funeral, and Mary was not even present for the funeral.[168]

#157. (257-8) It is stated that after Margaret made inflammatory statements in the 1937 Fillmore vs. Shelby lawsuit, the trial concluded with the judge ordering Margaret to appear before district attorney Buron Fitts to answer any questions he might have about the Taylor murder. We have not seen the judge's order, so we cannot be certain that this statement is incorrect. However, the verdict in that trial was given on September 23,

1937. A CAST OF KILLERS is clearly implying that the judge's order for Margaret to appear before Fitts was responsible for the 1937 flare-up of the case. On the contrary, Margaret made her statement before Fitts four months earlier, on May 5, 1937, and appeared before the grand jury on May 6, 1937. Both events took place three months before the Fillmore vs. Shelby trial even began, on August 13, 1937. The 1937 grand jury investigation into the Taylor murder was initiated at the request of Charlotte Shelby. Yes, AT THE REQUEST OF CHARLOTTE SHELBY! It was her request that began the whole 1937 investigation into the case (see TAYLOROLOGY 22), not the order of a judge.

#158. (258) Casa de Margarita was not sold by Shelby in 1926. It was part of the Paris settlement with Mary. On January 24, 1927, an agreement was signed whereby Mary received \$150,000 in bonds plus ownership of Casa de Margarita in settlement of all claims against her mother.[169] The mansion was sold by the bank to collect unpaid mortgage payments in 1932.[170]

#159. (258) Charlotte Shelby did not sail to Europe prior to Margaret Shelby's marriage to Hugh Fillmore. The marriage took place a year before Shelby sailed for Europe.

#160. (258) Margaret Shelby and Hugh Fillmore were married in Casa Margarita on May 26, 1925, not in 1926.[171]

#161. (258) Charlotte Shelby was present at the wedding of Margaret Shelby and Hugh Fillmore. The L.A. TIMES even published a photo of the wedding party, with Charlotte standing next to the bride and groom.[172] Also attending the wedding were Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Henry. Margaret was not "cut off financially" at the time of her marriage.

#162. (258-9) The marriage of Margaret Shelby Fillmore and Emmett J. Flynn was not motive for murder. Contrary to what is stated in A CAST OF KILLERS, this is the true sequence of events: Margaret is committed to a

mental hospital by Charlotte Shelby on August 5, 1936, primarily because of Margaret's erratic behavior due to alcoholism[173] and because Shelby felt Margaret was too unstable to testify in the lawsuit against the brokerage firm.[174] After her release, Margaret sues Shelby in October 1936, and is estranged from her for the remainder of her life. Margaret and Flynn are married in March 1937; a few days after the marriage both are arrested on charges of public intoxication.[175] In April 1937 the marriage is annulled--not because of anything Shelby does, but because Flynn is already married.[176] The Margaret/Flynn marriage has no effect on the estranged relationship between Margaret and Shelby.

#163. (266) There was no "secret conversation" between Taylor and Kirkwood a few days before the murder. Kirkwood was not in America at that time.[177]

#164. (267) The book contends that Mary Miles Minter was in Taylor's bungalow during Mabel Normand's last visit. Not likely. In 1930 Peavey expressed his belief to reporters that Mabel killed Taylor. Peavey expressed the same opinion in 1922, shortly after the murder, during his abduction by Hearst reporters.[178] Peavey had good reasons, from his perspective, to believe Mabel Normand was guilty.[179] His 1930 statement was essentially an unburdening of his conscience. If Mary were still in the bungalow when Peavey left, it is inconceivable that Peavey would not have mentioned it in 1930 or that he would have been so certain about Mabel Normand's guilt. In Peavey's official statement made in 1922, he stated that he was aware of only one visit by Mary to Taylor's home, and that visit took place shortly after he first began working for Taylor (in August 1921).[180] In 1930, Peavey declared that he had been ordered to keep quiet about the argument he witnessed between Mabel and Taylor during Mabel's last visit. If Peavey had also been ordered to keep quiet about Mary's presence in the bungalow, surely he would have said so at this time. It also is inconceivable that Mary could have been in the bungalow without Peavey

knowing about it. During Mabel's visit Taylor asked her out for dinner--she declined. In her official statement she said: "Mr. Taylor asked me if I had had dinner. I told him I had not and he said, 'Oh, then please let me take you out to dinner.'"[181] Would Taylor have asked Mabel out to dinner if Mary were waiting upstairs? Not likely.

#165. (267) On June 13, 1941, Detective Lieutenant Leroy Sanderson wrote a lengthy letter summarizing the evidence in the Taylor case, and in particular the case against Charlotte Shelby. The letter was reprinted in WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 315-330. There are some major differences between Margaret Shelby's 1937 testimony summarized there, and the testimony of Margaret Shelby reportedly related by Sanderson to Vidor in A CAST OF KILLERS. At the time the 1941 letter was written, Margaret Shelby was already dead, so she did not make any further testimony after Sanderson's letter was written. This the relevant portion of the Sanderson letter:

...A detailed written statement was taken from Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, May 5, 1937. In this statement Margaret disclosed that what she had said in her previous statements of March 10, 1926 and March 13, 1926 was not true. That she had only tried to cover up for her mother regarding the Taylor murder. She stated in substance, that on the night of February 1, 1922, Mary had been locked in her room by her mother, because Mrs. Shelby feared that Mary was going to run away with Taylor. That Mary left the house early in the evening, exact time unknown, and returned about 8:30 p.m. That she was nervous and upset and was crying. That later on that evening, although Mary and she were very bad friends, Mary came to her room and asked to remain there, stating that she was lonesome and didn't wish to be alone.

She stated that when Mrs. Shelby arrived at the Hobart house, early in the morning, she walked into Mary's bedroom and told her that Miss Berger had phoned her that morning and said that Taylor was dead. She stated that later Mary told her that she was sure her mother either

killed Taylor or was present when he was killed. She also stated that during August of 1922, Mrs. Julia Miles carried the gun used in the Taylor murder, to her plantation near Vastron, Louisiana and threw it into a bayou. She stated that a Doctor and Pauline Johnson resided on a plantation just across the bayou from Mrs. Miles' place. That Doctor Johnson was a well known dentist in Vastron and probably knew about Mrs. Miles throwing the gun into the bayou.

Margaret stated, both verbally and in her last written statement, that Mrs. Shelby had made many conflicting statements as to her whereabouts and actions on the night of February 1, 1922. She stated that Mrs. Shelby had told her family she had hired a private taxi about 6 p.m. February 1, 1922 and had been driven to a Swedish Eucalyptus Bath House, north of Hollywood Boulevard. She also stated that she had questioned the Doctor, who operated the Bath House, and after searching his records he informed Margaret that Mrs. Shelby had not been there that night.

Mrs. Shelby also stated that about 7 p.m., February 1, 1922, Carl Stockdale had called on her, at 701 New Hampshire, and they had sandwiches and milk together. He remained there until about 9 p.m. Margaret stated that her mother was in constant fear for several years after the Taylor murder, that Mary would talk too much and would involve her in the murder. That she was very much afraid of District Attorney Asa Keyes...[182]

In the above summary, nothing is said about Shelby taking the pistol with her on the night of the murder. It is unbelievable that Sanderson would have omitted mentioning that incident, if Margaret had indeed made such a statement.

#166. (267) In Sanderson's letter nothing is said about Minter giving details on the night of the murder to Margaret about Taylor's death, nothing about Minter telling Margaret that she (Minter) had been upstairs during Mabel Normand's visit, or about Minter telling Margaret that she (Minter)

had personally witnessed Shelby shooting Taylor. If these statements had been truly made by Margaret, surely Sanderson would have mentioned them in his letter. Instead, he writes that Margaret "stated that later [after the morning of February 2] Mary told her that she was sure her mother either killed Taylor or was present when he was killed." The phrase "or was present when he was killed" clearly contradicts what is attributed to Margaret in A CAST OF KILLERS, with Minter supposedly suggesting that someone else may have assisted Shelby and killed Taylor on behalf of Shelby, in Shelby's presence. In addition, Sanderson's letter theorizes that perhaps either James Kirkwood or Carl Stockdale killed Taylor on behalf of Shelby--further indication that Sanderson had NEVER heard Margaret supposedly state that Minter told Margaret that she (Minter) had personally witnessed Shelby shooting Taylor. (Sanderson was obviously also unaware that Kirkwood was out of the country at the time of the murder.)

#167. (267) The timetable of Margaret's statement in the Sanderson letter explicitly contradicts the timetable supposedly related by Margaret in A CAST OF KILLERS. In the Sanderson letter, Margaret stated that "Shelby had told her family she had hired a private taxi about 6 p.m."--indicating that Shelby was not at the Hobart house past that time (since Shelby was explaining where she had been during that time). Then the Sanderson letter has Margaret stating that Mary "returned about 8:30 p.m." So in the Sanderson letter, Margaret's testimony indicated there was a minimum of two and one-half hours between the time Shelby left and the time Minter returned. But A CAST OF KILLERS has Margaret stating that Mary returned only one hour after Shelby left, a clear contradiction.

#168. (268) A CAST OF KILLERS states that "The woman dressed like a man that Faith MacLean saw was Charlotte Shelby, dressed in a long coat." That statement defies credulity. In her statement to the District Attorney, Faith MacLean stated that the person she saw was about five feet nine and believed he wore a dark suit. "He was not a well-dressed man. He was

dressed like my idea of a motion picture burglar." [183] Charlotte Shelby was several inches shorter and was always well-dressed. A woman, dressed in a woman's long coat, seen from a distance of about 20 feet, could not possibly look like a man dressed in a dark suit. Also, a "motion picture burglar" would not have worn a long coat. Some writers (St. Johns, Ed King) have expressed the opinion that Shelby committed the murder dressed like a man. But A CAST OF KILLERS seems to express the opinion that Shelby committed the murder dressed like a woman but was mistaken for a man!

#169. (282) The book contends that Mary knew her mother killed Taylor. Really? Consider: Mary's infatuation/love for Taylor stayed with her for the remainder of her life. A few years before her death she stated, "I worshipped him in life...I worship him today." [184] Between 1923-1926, there was a fierce public battle waged between Mary and her mother regarding the money Mary had earned as a film star. Yet in 1927, there was a settlement between Mary and Shelby, and a true reconciliation. During the 1937 Grand Jury investigation, and in interviews given later, Mary defended her mother: "...mother knew nothing of it [the murder]" [185]; and "She [Adela Rogers St. Johns] has pilloried a very good woman [Charlotte Shelby], a very innocent woman, who was not particularly well-liked, straight as a die, who had not the slightest occasion to be killing Mr. Taylor." [186] It is unbelievable that Mary would have reconciled with Shelby and defended her so strongly if Mary thought Shelby were guilty of killing the love of her life.

#170. (285) Charlotte Shelby's death certificate clearly lists the primary cause of death as cerebral thrombosis.

#171. (286) Margaret Shelby Fillmore's death certificate, #39-074319, is on file under her legal name of Alma Margaret Fillmore, with the causes of death listed as alcoholic congestion, acute cardiac dilatation, and postal cirrhosis.

#172. (287) Peavey's last statements to the press did not claim that an actress and her mother killed Taylor--only an actress. From the context, the actress Peavey suspected is clearly Mabel Normand.[187]

#173. (287) Peavey died in 1931, not 1937:

Confirming the fact of Peavey's death, a telegram was received late yesterday from J. M. Scandland, superintendent of the Napa State Hospital, in which it was declared that the valet, suffering from general paresis, was admitted to the hospital in 1930 and died on December 27, 1931.[188]

#174. (188) It is stated that for many years THE HONEYCOMB "contained the only no-holds-barred account of the Taylor slaying." By what criteria? The Taylor case recap in THE HONEYCOMB is very short and superficial--St. Johns even mixes up Sands and Peavey. THE HONEYCOMB certainly did not agree with A CAST OF KILLERS' views on Taylor's purported homosexuality; according to THE HONEYCOMB Taylor was "debauching" Minter and carrying on a scandalous affair with her. Nor was St. Johns the first writer to indicate that Charlotte Shelby was the killer; Ed King reached the same conclusion in his 1930 article (reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 50), which was far more substantial than St. Johns' recap of the case written four decades later. Some other writers had also indicated Shelby was a prime suspect--for example, William H. A. Carr, in HOLLYWOOD TRAGEDY, 1962, which even mentioned Minter's abortion from her affair with Kirkwood. In our opinion, the most useful account of the Taylor slaying written prior to the 1980's was in KING OF COMEDY, due to the quantity of verbatim official testimony it contained from the files of the District Attorney. In fact, more verbatim official testimony appears in KING OF COMEDY than in A CAST OF KILLERS.

#175. (297) It is stated that the 1941 Sanderson letter "indisputably supports all of Mr. Vidor's findings in connection with his examination of L.A.P.D. files." However, reportedly (pp. 184-5) the police file indicated

that Taylor consistently refused Minter's advances. Contrarily, the Sanderson letter states "Mrs. Shelby...had threatened several times to kill Taylor, because she had a full knowledge of the affair that existed between him and Mary", indicating that there was indeed a sexual relationship between Taylor and Minter. We are not arguing that Taylor actually had a sexual relationship with Minter--on this particular subject we feel that Taylor probably did not have a sexual relationship with Minter. Our point though, is that Sanderson's letter does not "indisputably support" this finding.

* * * * *

Thus concludes our listing of 175 errors, contradictions, and illogical statements in A CAST OF KILLERS. The sum total of the above list establishes the book's lack of historical value. Shelby may have indeed killed Taylor, or had him killed, but convincing proof has not yet been presented. She certainly feared prosecution and conviction for the Taylor murder (the same was undoubtedly true of Sands), but that does not prove her guilt. If a defender of A CAST OF KILLERS wishes to issue a scholarly point-by-point rebuttal of items in the above list, citing sources, we will be glad to offer "equal time" and present that rebuttal in a future issue of TAYLOROLOGY.

A CAST OF KILLERS also reports some testimony attributed to Leslie Henry which we have never seen and remain skeptical unless we see verification: (1) Did Leslie Henry, who had a wife and daughter, really testify to being physically intimate with Shelby? (2) Did Leslie Henry really testify that Shelby stated that Asa Keyes would require more money than Woolwine?

* * * * *

Anyone who delves deeply into the Taylor case soon forms opinions about the

probability of rumored incidents, the characters of the people involved, and their relationships with each other. The following are some opinions we have formed which are contrary to A CAST OF KILLERS:

Based on the statements made by Neva Gerber and Taylor's associates, we feel confident that Neva Gerber and Taylor had a genuine romantic relationship which lasted from 1914 to 1919. It was not just "studio publicity"--in fact, we have never seen ANY "studio publicity" which linked them together.

Based on the statements made by Taylor's associates, and the photo of Mabel Normand which Taylor carried with him in a small frame engraved "to my dearest," we feel confident that Taylor had a genuine romantic relationship with Mabel Normand, and that Taylor's feelings for Mabel were probably stronger than Mabel's feelings for him.

Based on the fact that Taylor had given Minter a photograph which he autographed "Yours now and forever," we feel that Taylor probably had romantic feelings for Minter, at least during 1919-1920.[189]

Based on the interviews we have read with Mary Miles Minter, her reported reaction on the day after the murder, and the statements made by those associated with her, we do not believe that Minter was in Taylor's home during Mabel Normand's last visit, or that Minter had any knowledge of Taylor's death before the morning of February 2, 1922.

Based on the sum total of everything we have read about Taylor, and the statements made by his associates, we do not believe that Taylor was a child molester.

Despite our criticism of A CAST OF KILLERS we do appreciate its publication, because it brought the William Desmond Taylor case to many new readers. If it had not been written, A DEED OF DEATH, WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, and electronic TAYLOROLOGY itself, all might never have been published. For taking that first step, A CAST OF KILLERS receives our thanks.

NOTES:

- [1] See Mack Sennett and Cameron Shipp, KING OF COMEDY (Doubleday, 1954).
- [2] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (May 24, 1922).
- [3] See SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 6, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 62.
- [4] LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 4, 1937).
- [5] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 8, 1922).
- [6] LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 17, 1922). Also see LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 15, 1922).
- [7] LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 7, 1922).
- [8] See TAYLOROLOGY 19.
- [9] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 58.
- [10] See NEW YORK HERALD (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 45.
- [11] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922), NEW YORK HERALD (February 6, 1922) and NEW YORK AMERICAN (February 14, 1922).
- [12] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 216.
- [13] One of the coded letters from Minter to Taylor can be seen at <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/MMMCodeLetter.pdf>
- [14] See, for example, LOS ANGELES HERALD (August 14, 1923). Also see LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 3, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 60: "...here I was home, reading a book--enjoying it so much--and he was lying there in his apartment, stone dead." "Here" refers to the home on Hobart; note the reference in the interview to the "quaint adobe home". Also see TAYLOROLOGY 6 and 35.
- [15] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (October 4, 1922).
- [16] For some rumors on Dixon see TAYLOROLOGY 7.
- [17] SANTA ANA REGISTER (March 18, 1922). Other articles gave the suspect's name as Walter Kirby.
- [18] See SACRAMENTO BEE (March 18, 1922), LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (May 3, 1922) and TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [19] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (January 6, 1930) and TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [20] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 11, 1937).

- [21] LOS ANGELES HERALD (January 14, 1930).
- [22] LOS ANGELES NEWS (February 24, 1930).
- [23] LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 6, 1922).
- [24] See PANTOMIME (March 18, 1922) and NEW YORK TELEGRAPH (February 12, 1922).
- [25] A copy of Taylor's birth certificate (William Cunningham Deane Tanner) is at <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/birth.pdf>.
- [26] See A DEED OF DEATH, p. 52.
- [27] See A DEED OF DEATH, p. 148.
- [28] NEW YORK DAILY NEWS (February 6, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 45.
- [29] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 17, 1922).
- [30] SANTA BARBARA PRESS (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 29.
- [31] NEW YORK AMERICAN (February 13, 1922). He had been given the nickname "Pete" by friends in New York. His movements were so calculating and deliberate that they sarcastically called him "P.D.Q." which was shortened to "Petey" and then "Pete." See WASHINGTON TIMES (February 14, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 45.
- [32] NEW YORK HERALD (February 6, 1922).
- [33] NEW YORK HERALD (February 5, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 19 and 62.
- [34] DENVER POST (March 3, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 19.
- [35] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 42.
- [36] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 6, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 62.
- [37] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 41-42.
- [38] See NEW YORK AMERICAN (February 13, 1922).
- [39] See Kevin Brownlow, HOLLYWOOD: THE PIONEERS (Knopf, 1979), p. 111.
- [40] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922).
- [41] See Douglas Whitton, "Mystery Woman Director," CLASSIC IMAGES (July 1985).
- [42] See TAYLOROLOGY 40.
- [43] See TAYLOROLOGY 40.
- [44] LOS ANGELES TIMES (June 4, 1918).
- [45] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 4, 1922).

- [46] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (February 7, 1922).
- [47] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 92-104.
- [48] LOS ANGELES HERALD (December 18, 1919).
- [49] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 6, 1922), reprinted in WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 95.
- [50] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 2, 1922) and LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922).
- [51] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 291.
- [52] See TAYLOROLOGY 20.
- [53] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 5, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 57.
- [54] LOS ANGELES TIMES (March 5, 1922).
- [55] NEW YORK TELEGRAPH (January 22, 1922).
- [56] NEW YORK TELEGRAPH (February 5, 1922).
- [57] See Edward Wagenknecht, THE MOVIES IN THE AGE OF INNOCENCE (Ballantine, 1971), p. 229.
- [58] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 15, 1922).
- [59] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 243.
- [60] See Sidney Sutherland, "Mabel Normand--Comedienne and Madcap," LIBERTY (September 27, 1930), reprinted at <http://www.mdle.com/ClassicFilms/FeaturedStar/mabel4.htm>.
- [61] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 11, 1922).
- [62] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 4, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 61.
- [63] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 11, 1922).
- [64] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 14, 1922).
- [65] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 15, 1922).
- [66] See TAYLOROLOGY 21.
- [67] LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 7, 1922)
- [68] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 241-259.
- [69] See TAYLOROLOGY 58.
- [70] See Betty Fussell, MABEL (Ticknor & Fields, 1982), p. 179, and MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS.
- [71] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 222.

- [72] See LOS ANGELES HERALD (January 9, 1922), reprinted in MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS, p. 133.
- [73] HOLLYWOOD: THE YEARS OF INNOCENCE (Abbeville, 1985), p. 94.
- [74] See clippings in MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS, pp. 264-5.
- [75] LOS ANGELES DAILY NEWS, February 25, 1930, reprinted in MABEL NORMAND: A SOURCE BOOK TO HER LIFE AND FILMS.
- [76] KING OF COMEDY, p. 244.
- [77] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 6, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 62.
- [78] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 15, 1922).
- [79] See TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [80] SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 4, 1922).
- [81] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 3, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 56.
- [82] CLASSIC IMAGES No. 70. Also see ROSCOE "FATTY" ARBUCKLE: A BIOGRAPHY OF THE SILENT FILM COMEDIAN by Stuart Oderman (McFarland, 1994); and MABEL, pp. 80-81.
- [83] See TAYLOROLOGY 8.
- [84] See TAYLOROLOGY 30.
- [85] See THE HONEYCOMB, p. 106.
- [86] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 4, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 60; and LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 57 and 61.
- [87] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 57.
- [88] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 4, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 60
- [89] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 5, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 57.
- [90] LOS ANGELES HERALD (August 14, 1923).
- [91] SHREVEPORT TIMES (May 23, 1902). Charlotte Shelby was Mrs. J. Homer Reilly, and Julia Miles was Charlotte Shelby's mother.
- [92] See NEW YORK CLIPPER (September 9, 1911).
- [93] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (May 22, 1937).
- [94] WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 62.
- [95] See TAYLOROLOGY 11. Minter was 17 in 1919.

- [96] See NEW YORK TELEGRAPH (November 16, 1919).
- [97] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (April 27, 1921) and LOS ANGELES TIMES (April 24, 1921).
- [98] See TAYLOROLOGY 35.
- [99] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 11, 1922).
- [100] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (January 30, 1925).
- [101] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (December 9, 1922).
- [102] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 329.
- [103] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (October 13, 14 and 17, 1921).
- [104] A copy of the genuine letter can be seen at <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/MMMLoveLetter.pdf>. See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 7, 1922), SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 8, 1922), AMERICAN WEEKLY (February 25, 1940) or CLASSIC IMAGES (Winter 1977) for other photos of this letter.
- [105] See <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/MMMPhoto.pdf> for a copy of the Minter photo autographed to Taylor. Note that the signature is the same as in the above letter. This photo originally appeared in the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 4, 1937).
- [106] A genuine photograph of Faith MacLean can be seen at <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/MacLeans.pdf>. Another photo of her can be seen in MOVIE WEEKLY (February 14, 1925).
- [107] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (April 27, 1921) and LOS ANGELES TIMES (April 24, 1921).
- [108] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 17, 1922).
- [109] For a genuine photo of Sands, see A DEED OF DEATH, p. 126, and Capt. Jesse Winn, "Who Killed William Desmond Taylor?" in FRONT PAGE DETECTIVE (June 1937), p. 81.
- [110] LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 2, 1922)
- [111] LOS ANGELES TIMES, February 3, 1922
- [112] KING OF COMEDY, pp. 234-5.
- [113] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 3, 1922), LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 3, 1922), LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 6, 1922), LOS ANGELES

HERALD (February 9, 1922), LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 12, 1922) and KING OF COMEDY, p. 226.

[114] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 11, 1922).

[115] KING OF COMEDY, p. 235.

[116] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 12, 1922).

[117] See BART: MEMOIRS OF FRANK H. BARTHOLOMEW (Vine Press, 1983), p. 26.

[118] LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 10, 1922).

[119] A DEED OF DEATH, p. 246.

[120] See DENVER POST (February 26, 1922).

[121] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (August 15, 1923), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 11.

[122] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 228.

[123] See Charles Higham, CELEBRITY CIRCUS (Delacorte, 1979) p. 113.

[124] LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 2, 1922).

[125] See TAYLOROLOGY 14.

[126] See TAYLOROLOGY 50.

[127] LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 6, 1922).

[128] See NEW YORK AMERICAN (February 13, 1922).

[129] See TAYLOROLOGY 58.

[130] CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER (February 8, 1922).

[131] LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 3, 1937).

[132] See LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (February 2, 1937) for comparison of the handwriting.

[133] See WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, p. 331.

[134] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 17, 1922).

[135] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922).

[136] See TAYLOROLOGY 50.

[137] Ed King, "I Know Who Killed Desmond Taylor", TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES (October 1930), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 50. Also LOS ANGELES NEWS (September 9, 1937) for the testimony of Jesse Winn.

[138] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (December 24, 1929).

[139] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (December 24, 1929).

[140] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 12, 1922).

- [141] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (March 31, 1926).
- [142] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (March 6, 1922).
- [143] See BOSTON HERALD (March 8, 1922).
- [144] See TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [145] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 244.
- [146] LIBERTY (September 27, 1930).
- [147] DENVER POST (February 9, 1922).
- [148] SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 6, 1922).
- [149] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 235.
- [150] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (December 22, 1929).
- [151] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (December 24, 1929).
- [152] LOS ANGELES RECORD (March 30, 1926).
- [153] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 2, 1922) reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 56.
- [154] LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (February 6, 1922), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 64.
- [155] LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 3, 1922).
- [156] LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 3, 1922).
- [157] LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 3, 1922).
- [158] See A DEED OF DEATH, p. 28.
- [159] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (January 30, 1925).
- [160] See TAYLOROLOGY 35.
- [161] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (December 23, 1932), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 41.
Also see LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 22, 1936).
- [162] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (April 11, 1933).
- [163] See TAYLOROLOGY 35.
- [164] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (August 4, 1924).
- [165] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (April 25, 1925).
- [166] See TAYLOROLOGY 35 and See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (May 29, 1936).
- [167] See LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (October 11, 1956).
- [168] See PHOTOPLAY (February 1926) and LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 6, 1927).
- [169] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (May 29, 1936).
- [170] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (December 28, 1932).

- [171] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 27, 1925).
- [172] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 27, 1925).
- [173] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (September 1 and 4, 1937).
- [174] See LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (May 6, 1937), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 12.
- [175] See LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (March 20, 1937).
- [176] See LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (April 26, 1937).
- [177] See TAYLOROLOGY 20.
- [178] See SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 21, 1922) and note 39 to TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [179] See TAYLOROLOGY 6.
- [180] See KING OF COMEDY, p. 228.
- [181] KING OF COMEDY, p. 244.
- [182] WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, pp. 324-325.
- [183] KING OF COMEDY, p. 236.
- [184] MABEL, p. 177.
- [185] LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS (May 6, 1937), reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 12.
- [186] CELEBRITY CIRCUS, p. 111.
- [187] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (January 7, 1930) and note 39 to TAYLOROLOGY 50.
- [188] LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 11, 1937).
- [189] For an excellent reproduction of the photo autographed from Taylor to Minter, see TRUE CRIME: UNSOLVED CRIMES (Time-Life Books, 1993), p. 143.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

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or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 66 -- June 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Interviews with Edna Purviance

Edna Purviance was Charlie Chaplin's leading lady for nearly a decade, and was a close neighbor of William Desmond Taylor at the time of his murder. The following are some interviews with her conducted between 1916 and 1924.

* * * * *

June 24, 1916

REEL LIFE

[from an interview with Edna Purviance]..."When Mr. Chaplin signed his \$670,000 contract with the Mutual Film Corporation, he took most of his company with him, and in March, 1916, we began work here at the Mutual studios in Los Angeles. Our first picture was 'The Floorwalker,' followed by 'The Fireman.' The one you saw us working on just now is going to be released under the title of 'The Vagabond.' I consider it the best we have done so far for the Mutual.

"Yes, I am fond of sports, especially swimming and motoring. I dearly love ice cream sodas, and strawberry short cake. My chief occupation outside of posing for the camera is keeping down to 123 pounds. I have a perfect horror of becoming overplump, and so I exercise every day as a precaution. No, I don't believe in curling one's hair artificially. I believe that a blonde is much more attractive with her hair naturally straight.

"Mr. Chaplin is calling me. I guess he is ready for that next scene. Good-bye, and please don't print what I said about getting fat--it sounds so prosaic."

* * * * *

April 1918

Hazel Simpson Naylor

MOTION PICTURE

Little Miss Happiness

Tap-tap-tap.--No answer. Tap-rap-rap, louder and more impatiently.--No answer.

Tap-bang-bang! (No, dear readers, this is not an imitation of Poe's raven, but, like Mr. Poe's persistent bird, I was a-knock, knock, knocking at Miss Purviance's door.)

Suddenly, back it swung, and a small figure, wrapped in a Japanese silk

kimono of sunkist-yellow and emerald green, gasped, "O-oh, come right in! I'm so sorry! I overslept."

With superb unconcern for their fragileness, Edna Purviance gathered up a heap of pink chiffon fluffy-ruffles from the most comfortable chair the room boasted and motioned me to be seated. Then she curled herself up cross-legged, in middle of the huge posted mahogany bed. One dear little pink pajama leg just peeped from beneath her brilliant kimono. Her soft hair, the color of sunflowers in moonlight, was wound about her beautifully shaped little head, coronet fashion. Her large, forget-me-not-eyes gazed questioningly at a world which she finds entirely fascinating. Their almost preposterously long, dark lashes swept young cheeks as white and smooth as marble.

But there is nothing of marble in the composition of Edna Purviance. She makes one think of peaches and cream, of a white angora kitten, happy and contented in the warm sunlight of love-- But, there, I am waxing poetic. Back to the cold, black print.

Now, nine out of ten celebrities, when asked what they consider caused their success, will announce:

"Work--good, hard, never-give-up work."

But not so Edna Purviance. When I put the question to her, she let out a little gurgle of enthusiasm. "Just luck, wonderful, wonderful luck. I am the happiest girl in all the world. Here I am just turned twenty-one. I have everything I want--things I should never have dreamt of obtaining--and it's all due to luck.

"You see, I had taken stenography with my high-school course in Nevada, and when we moved to California I finished a complete business course and seriously studied the piano. Vaguely, I imagined that some day I might be a big musician, and then one evening I accidentally met Mr. Chaplin through a mutual friend. Mr. Chaplin asked me if I would like to act in pictures with him. I laughed at the idea, but agreed to try it. I never thought I would ever go through with another after that first picture. I want to tell you that I suffered untold agonies. Eyes seemed to be everywhere. I was simply

frightened to death. But Mr. Chaplin had unlimited patience in directing me and teaching me. I learnt everything I know from him.

"Personally, Mr. Chaplin is a very wonderful man. He does all kinds of good with his money, but as quietly as possible. He simply pours thousands of dollars into England to help the war along. He says if he is called to serve actively (he is still an English subject, you know) he will go. But, oh, it seems to me" (she clasped her hands anxiously about her knees) "as if he can do so much more good right where he is! Not only can he help by furnishing an unusual amount of money, but he can bring joy, freedom from care, into the hearts of the people, and that's a greatly needed item in war days, let me tell you.

"Mr. Chaplin has some wonderful stories for our next comedies. He just works them out in his head, you know, but has told several of them to me, and they are greater than anything we have ever done--less slapstick--and we are going to do three-reelers now, which will give him a better opportunity."

They are only waiting for their new studio to be finished before getting down to good hard work. It is going to be unique among studios--a place where one can enjoy life as well as work. Mr. Chaplin bought the land in Hollywood. On it is a most beautiful home, which he will preserve, but the grounds surrounding it were filled with lemon and orange trees, and these he had to have cut down to make room for the studio, which is old English architecture and very picturesque. One would never think it was a studio. Two horses are going to be kept on the place for Sid Chaplin and Miss Edna to ride. Charlie Chaplin doesn't ride. Edna is going to have her own piano in the studio so that she can keep up her music during dull hours.

Edna reached over to where an enormous bouquet of yard-long-stemmed pink roses stood at the foot of her bed and broke off one, then settled herself cozily again, tailor-fashion, and gazed dreamily out of the window at the myriad of New York sky-scrappers.

"You know," she said, pressing the rose to her satiny nostrils, "you may think me queer, but I am very glad I don't have to work in New York.

"This is the first time I have ever been East in all my life, you know.

I have spent all of my twenty-one years in Nevada and California. My friends who have taken me around since I have been in New York City make more fun of me and say, 'For goodness sake, Edna, close your mouth and don't "Oh, oh" so! People will think you are a regular rube.'

"Yes, New York is all very wonderful; its shops, theaters and hotels are magnificent; but I'll be glad to get back home. There the climate is warm and sunshiny and every one knows everybody. Here there is just a wild, scrambling, conglomerate mob, and one little atom of humanity more or less makes very little difference. Oh, no; I shouldn't care to work in New York, and although I have enjoyed seeing all the sights and people have given me a wonderful time, I shall be glad when I get word that the studio is finished, vacation time is over and it's time for me to return to California and work. Of course, in a way, I shall be sorry to leave New York. It has been a life-long dream realized, and now"--she looked at me a little mischievously--"and now I shall have to get another dream. I wonder what it will be?"

This sounded interesting, but all my tactful questions elicited no further startling information than that the beautiful Edna loved Marvel perfume, hated to have her photograph taken and was going to buy a new automobile very soon.

A knock came at the door, and Edna Purviance jumped down from her downy perch and admitted an obsequious waiter with a breakfast tray.

"Oh," she said, "I'm not ready yet. Take it into the next room, and be sure and keep my eggs hot."

I myself dislike nothing so much as cold eggs, so I could sympathize with the beautiful vision curled so cozily on the bed and started to wrap my furs about my neck in preparation for a hurried exit, but I happened to say, "Weren't you at the Supper Club the other evening?" which started the conversation ball rolling again.

Edna likes to dance better than almost anything else, although as she naively added, "But then of course I like 'most everything."

Yes, she even likes all the people who stop her on the streets and say, "Oh, isn't this Edna Purviance? I just want to shake hands with you.

I enjoy you so much on the screen."

And people seldom realize what advantage they take of an actress. She has absolutely no privacy; on the other hand, sometimes it is mighty handy to be well known. This was evidenced by a rather unpleasant incident which happened in Chicago when Miss Purviance stopped off there for a couple of days on her way East.

One evening about eight o'clock, Edna Purviance, Blanche Sweet and Adele Rowland took it into their heads that they would like to walk up Michigan Avenue and see the sights. They did, but were terribly annoyed by three men who followed them, exchanging such crude remarks as the well-known phrase, "Some chicken!"

The girls turned to hurry back to the hotel. Whereupon one of the men, catching a glimpse of their faces said, "Gee, fellows, beat it! That's Edna Purviance and Blanche Sweet!"

And so I asked, "Tell me honestly, how does it feel to be a celebrity at twenty-one?"

Edna Purviance bit her finely modeled lower lip between two pearly rows of teeth, as much as to say, "Shall I tell the truth or not?" decided to give the verdict to the former, and said:

"I'll tell you seriously. I do enjoy a number of thrills from the success I have attained. I don't really believe I am even ambitious to do dramatic roles. I am perfectly happy that I am to be Mr. Chaplin's leading lady for another year at least."

After all, in this age, when everyone's cult is persistent endeavor and struggling ambition, struggling always for something just out of reach, as pleasing as an unexpected buttercup in a field of tares comes Edna Purviance, who is perfectly satisfied with things as they are.

Perhaps her book of life is not so difficult reading as Aristotle, but it's a great deal pleasanter to peruse. It's the philosophy of the contented.

* * * * *

November 1919

Maude Cheatham

MOTION PICTURE CLASSIC

A Star Who Longs For Pretty Clothes

Now, all of us know that Edna Purviance, the feminine inspiration to the screen characters of the famous comedian, Charlie Chaplin, is a very beautiful girl. We know it because no one but a real beauty could rise resplendent, as does she, above that most trying of stage costumes, the comedy make-up. Her vivid, sparkling personality asserts itself despite the dowdy clothes and the click-back hair which she wears in the Chaplin films.

I was thinking of this as I watched her slip out of the plain calico dress in which she will appear in the new picture, into her own distinctive sport togs, for the day's work at the Chaplin studio in Hollywood was over, and Edna and I were chatting in her lovely blue and grey dressing-room.

"Of course, like all girls, I love pretty clothes," she declared, "and at the beginning of each picture we have a great discussion, for I beg for a chance to wear them. Mr. Chaplin tries to encourage me by saying that in this make-up I have a great opportunity for good character work. But," moaned Edna, "I would be willing to sacrifice a little 'art' to look nice sometimes. Guess that shows that I am more woman than actress, doesn't it?" And a gay little laugh echoed through the room.

There is a good-humored, easy-going wholesomeness about this girl that seems to radiate an "I should worry" atmosphere, and with her irresistible buoyancy of spirits it is impossible to imagine even one little unhappy thought finding a harbor in her blithe young heart.

"I'm the only girl around the studio most of the time, and they treat me like a queen," went on Edna, as she loosened her lovely yellow hair, which is real, and arranged it softly about her face. "Everything is always pleasant and harmonious. Mr. Chaplin is very quiet himself and dislikes any unnecessary commotion.

"He writes and directs his own pictures and, I tell you, I have to be wide awake and on the alert to keep pace with him, for I never know at what instant he will think up some big scene and, when he is in the mood, he likes to work quickly and steadily. It is always interesting to watch him develop the action, for he insists that there must be a cause leading up to the fights, the runaways, or whatever it is. He acts out our parts for us, and I assure you he can play even my role better than I can, for he is a natural imitator."

Edna's advent into motion pictures is like a fairy-tale. She was born in Nevada, and her father being a mining man, she spent her childhood in small mining towns, later going over to San Francisco to complete her high school course.

Then one day, Charlie Chaplin arrived in the city!

He was in search of a beautiful blonde to play the lead in his pictures. Through a mutual friend, Miss Purviance was introduced to the little comedian, who instantly recognized her photographic possibilities, and she was engaged. With absolutely no stage or screen experience, she walked right into the Chaplin films and right into the hearts of the fans with her unusual type of mirthful character that has successfully aided in the presentation of these excruciatingly funny comedies.

"I guess Mr. Chaplin took me because I had nothing to unlearn and he could teach me in his own way, but oh, that FIRST PICTURE!" And Edna threw back her head and laughed. "I never expected he would give me another chance, for I certainly took the prize for dumbness. However, I was willing and I TRIED; that was encouraging. Being with him has given me a most wonderful training, for he is a real genius!

"We have many amusing experiences in our work, and being keyed up to the funny point makes them all the more ridiculous. I remember, while making 'The Immigrant,' we spent a whole week on a boat between San Pedro and Catalina Island, and nearly every one in the company was ill except Charlie and me. We had made up our minds NOT to be! Well, awful as it was and sorry as we were, it was screamingly funny to see the different actors in their

comedy make-up suffering with seasickness. One man, dressed as a Russian immigrant, with a long beard to his waist and with layers of yellow powder on his face, was terribly ill, but we had to laugh, for he presented the most ludicrous figure imaginable." And the big blue eyes twinkled with the recollection.

"My latest craze is flying!" Edna announced, as we strolled through the lovely studio grounds. "The biggest thrill I ever had was last week, when I christened Sid Chaplin's airplane, (with orange juice, mind you!) and made the first trip over to Catalina Island. I had gone up once before in an army plane, when I was frightened 'most to pieces, but somehow, sailing over the ocean didn't seem scary at all. We could look down on the boat that had started long before we did, and there it was, chugging slowly through the water. I never felt so free--and light--and with no tomorrow or yesterday--just NOW! I can readily understand how aviators grow reckless in time, for you are not conscious of speed and there is nothing in the way--just you, illimitable space and the heavens!

"Everything is interesting to me," continued Edna. "I think the war made us all appreciate work and the supreme joy it brings. I would hate to be absolutely contented, just sit down and do nothing, for such a state of mind would include no ambitions and would make one a slacker in a world that needs effort. It is a wholesome discontent that spurs us on to endeavor and is the real incentive for all progress. I believe in working when you work and playing when you play!"

She has a charming little apartment, with a competent maid, where she makes a grand bluff at housekeeping, but with her studio hours and her many social engagements, for she is a great favorite, there is little time for much home life. Her dearest possessions are her piano and her automobile, and although she has studied music steadily for years and is an accomplished pianist, she admits, sadly, that the automobile is crowding her music into the background.

Then, she swims and dances and rides horseback, and with it all Edna Purviance is about the breeziest, sunniest, happiest girl I have met in a

long, long time!

* * * * *

February 1922
Clyde Stuart
MOTION PICTURE

In Placid Mold

Edna Purviance has had the unusual faculty of endurance in a profession where success blooms swiftly--and fades even as it blooms.

Among one's earliest memories of screen comedy, her blonde beauty stands out clearly. Then it was as it is today--the inevitable companion of a little black mustache and a pair of shuffling, enormous feet. Edna was Chaplin's foil in his first rioting two-reelers, and she was his leading lady in his last and greatest picture, "The Kid." In between lies a period of years in which, admittedly, there have been Chaplin pictures without Edna, but very few. Always the great "Charlot" has returned to her.

One can readily understand how Edna's calm, unruffled personality would make a superb background, for an artist as undoubtedly temperamental as Chaplin. The serenity of it was recognizable even over the telephone.

It was a little exasperating, the cool pleasantness of that voice. I had been trying to make a definite appointment for two weeks or more, but I had never gotten further than a deliberate: "Well, just now I have to see to my wardrobe. If you will go to the studio at three, I will TRY to be there." I give Edna all due credit for trying, but she was not there.

And then, to further tantalize, I saw her about a week later at Sunset Inn, down at Santa Monica, on Photoplayers' Nite, where Louise Fazenda and I had gone to watch Milton Sills preside. A cluster of stars were there--Betty Compson dancing with Rudolph Valentino, Nazimova, Bobby Harron's brother John with some pretty companion. Edna, in a red evening gown of becoming simplicity, was sitting a few tables beyond us, very beautiful, from where we

sat, with firm, startlingly white shoulders and straight decisive features. Her figure is perhaps a little rounder than it was, its former lithesomeness supplanted by a more stunning maturity of mold, a fire erectness of carriage. She took her pleasure as one must imagine she takes everything, calmly, with an almost stolid gaiety. It is impossible to imagine her ever becoming mussed, in hair or in dress. She grooms herself scrupulously.

I managed to find her at home only a few days later.

She was, as I had thought, pleasantly quiescent, placidly willing to talk to me, but, as she regretted, with nothing exciting to say.

"What truth there may be in the report that Charlie is to feature me in a picture before I leave him, I do not know. It certainly is not in 'The Idle Class.' In that I have little else to do than to wear some becoming gowns. But I have two more pictures to make with Charlie before our contract runs out.

She liked "The Kid" because it was the first comedy that ever gave her any amount of acting to do. She deplored it because by the time it was released, a year after it was commenced, her clothes were quite out of fashion. She is intensely interested in clothes. One can hardly blame her. She wears them exceedingly well. Even that afternoon, in her plaid sport skirt and sweater, she looked delightful. Her hair was carefully, smoothly arranged. And apparently its order was permanent. She did not continually pat at it. She has that rare art of dressing at the beginning of the day; not all through it.

The beauty of women is strange. With some it is chiseled, distinct--like Edna's. Her eyebrows are perfect. Her blue eyes had apparently been polished that morning. In sketching her, the artist would outline her in one continuous unbroken line. It is a type of beauty that often needs kindling.

I asked her what, then, she would do when she left Chaplin.

She refused to be definite.

"It is hard to say. There are several offers to be considered, all of them more or less worth while. It is not improbable that I will join the United Artists and have my own company."

Edna lives in a beautiful section of Los Angeles, considerably apart from Hollywood. It is strange that many of the earlier members of the Coast film colony are not residents of Hollywood. They seem to prefer isolation in the more prosaic, but no less beautiful, residential districts. Edna lives on a street near Westlake Park from which, by taking one or two steps from the door, she can overlook the only lake in the city. Her bungalow, one of several in a court, is crowded with silver loving cups, Chinese prints, an assortment of musical instruments. The cups, Edna explained, she had won years ago, when the movies were in the first unrestrained heyday of their fame, when blue laws, and censors, and prohibitionists, and speed cops never dared show their heads. The Chinese prints came from Chinese fans across the sea.

"I try," said Edna, "to get away from Los Angeles as much as possible between pictures. I go to Santa Barbara a great deal--and Coronado. It is fatal to stay here too long at a time."

One cannot think of her doing things superlatively. That is, she would smile where we might laugh. She would say, "That's nice" where we would exclaim, "Oh, wonderful!" But, on the other hand, she would say "It doesn't matter" where we would grate out a "Positively disgusting!" or something more graphic. It is not a quality to be criticized. It is philosophical in a way. It is Edna's denial of Worry, the bugbear of most of us. Without it, it is true, she might have progressed much further in the film world than she has. She has been for many years one of the most photographically perfect women on the screen. It is only that content, that resignation, that has failed to give her the necessary stimulus.

It is to be hoped that her tentative plan of joining the United Artists may be realized and carried through to success. Edna has become one of the traditions of the American screen. It would be a pity if her departure from Chaplin pictures should in any way tend to lessen her appearance upon it. I do not think that she intends that it shall. She did not tell who it was that proposed to back her. Things are too indefinite for that yet, but she spoke with easy confidence. Her future does not disconcert her apparently.

Her last remark, when she came to the door to say good-bye, gave a clear view of her attitude toward things generally.

"I'm sorry I didn't have anything extraordinary to tell you," she said, with a slow smile. "But life's rather dull just now anyway!"

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor's Light Burned Late

Miss Edna Purviance, who lived in the two-story bungalow adjoining the home of William D. Taylor, the Lasky film director who was shot Wednesday night, said that when she returned to her home some time near midnight Wednesday she noticed lights burning in Mr. Taylor's house, but that as Mr. Taylor was given to burning the midnight oil, being a great reader, she thought nothing of it.

"I was awakened," said Miss Purviance last night, "early Thursday morning by the terrifying voice of some one who seemed to be running up and down the court, screaming, 'Mr. Taylor is dead! Mr. Taylor is dead!' I looked out the window and saw his Negro boy Henry, who was almost frantic with grief, as he was very much attached to Mr. Taylor.

"Before they found the bullet wound in Mr. Taylor's back they thought he had died of heart disease, and that seemed terrible enough, but when we learned he had been murdered, almost at our own door, it seemed too horrible to believe.

"I knew Mr. Taylor only very slightly. I had never worked with him and had only met him to a purely formal social way. I thought him to be a very interesting, likable, discerning gentleman, with gallant, polished manners and a brilliant intellect.

"I always heard him spoken of as a man with a reputation above reproach and a nature that was kind and generous. Although living as a near

neighbor,I saw him very infrequently and knew nothing of his private life or of his love affairs, if he had any. I knew that he and Miss Normand were good friends but knew nothing of heart interest on either side."

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February 12, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Miss Edna Purviance, film actress who lives at 402 A South Alvarado, in the house next to the one occupied by Taylor, said:

"I was not at home the night of the murder, so of course I did not hear or see anything unusual."

She explained that she and her mother had been away from home until about 11:45 o'clock.

"Reports in the newspapers that I tried the door and rang the bell of Mr. Taylor's home, when I noticed lights burning there, are false," Miss Purviance said.

"There is nothing unusual to me in the sight of lights burning in a private home at midnight, and I certainly did not try to enter the house that night."

* * * * *

October 21, 1923
Alma Whitaker
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The New Edna Purviance

Edna Purviance emerges. Behold the little lady of Charlie Chaplin's slapstick comedy fame, whose sole duty was to look nice and sweet and get ogled and bumped into by a rummy-looking little comedian for lo, these many

years, suddenly transformed into a star dramatic actress.

There isn't any doubt about the stardom or the amazing dramatic talent after one has seen Chaplin's "A Woman of Paris." The only question is, is it inherent, all her own, or is Charlie her Svengali who hypnotically compels that evidence of genius?

So I called her up at 8 a. m. one morning--an awful test of temperament. And sure enough she answered, serene and cheerful, the same placid natural Edna I had known years before. And then we had lunch together.

She arrived punctually on the dot, chic, tailored, smiling, quietly radiant. Nothing blase about Edna, even if she does play the role of a disillusioned demimondaine in "A Woman of Paris."

And she still has her sense of humor--that precious asset which has sustained her amazing friendship with the temperamental Charlie through so many vicissitudes. She can laugh good-naturedly, almost maternally at Charlie--as the Polas, Mildreds, Claires, Mays and Peggys never could. They understand each other so well, these two.

I think Edna has always loved Charlie--but she never let him break her heart. She would smile understandingly, with masterly inactivity. And so, of all the women in Charlie's life, Edna has been the most important factor.

Just once did she blow up in a sumptuous rage--after the thirtieth rehearsal of the scene in "A Woman of Paris" where the girls show her the magazine article about the coming marriage of her "gentleman friend." Charlie, monsieur le directoire, was awed into docility. Pola had handed him one or two of these temperamental uprisings, otherhow, elsewhere, so he was case-hardened to those. But this was the placid Edna in a new guise, a rare guise, a very much alive and dominating guise. It impressed him mightily--and thereafter the picture went with infinitely smoother gait.

I asked Edna about this thrill of emergence. She laughed and said Charlie had kept them all working too hard, too furiously disciplined, too concerned about his emergence rather than their own, so she really had not had time to settle down to the thrill yet.

But yes, she loved it. Yes, she was ambitious. But she was in the

hands of Charlie.

She had no plans apart from him. Her one concern was to catch his ideas, see eye to eye with him, feel his ideals, portray his inspirations--for the greater glory of Mr. Charles Spencer Chaplin, director, author, producer.

Her portrayal of Marie, the demimondaine, is truly remarkable. It must be remembered that the demimondaine is a distinct class in France. She is not a common prostitute, but invariably a girl of good family and education, whose lack of a "dot"--a marriage portion, so essential in French marriages--inclines her to accept the position of "mistress" or "petite amis."

It really amounts to a recognized profession in the edge of society. It is understood that she is "exclusive"--and loyal to her well-to-do "protector."

Thus she is not supposed to portray either passionate romance or sirenical vampireness. And her momentary craving for "respectability," for home, husband and babies--which offers so sumptuous an opportunity for sophisticated cynicism in the play--is natural, as is her quick reaction to professional considerations, her restored poise, her crushing of emotions.

Your well-bred demimondaine knows full well that violent emotions are unbecoming in a lady in her position.

There has been some criticism that there were no real love scenes between her and the young artist who commits suicide for her sake. Edna defends this. She was not supposed to be in love with him. Rather is she guarding her emotions against falling in love with her wealthy, dashing, sophisticated "protector"--which would be such a sorry faux pas.

But the artist lover did represent respectability, marriage, homes, babies, and it was rather in this sentimental guise that we are to accept her interest in him. Her weeping over the bier is regret only for sorrow brought to that family through her. On his understanding, Edna's portrayal is masterly, brilliantly natural.

Edna says that during the making of the play Charlie would say, "Now if this happened to you in real life, what would you do?" She would answer

conscientiously and then be told to go ahead and do it.

"Never mind keeping your face to the camera," said Charlie, "your emotions will be seen and felt through any part of your body at any angle, if you act well." This, said Edna, gave one such a wide scope, left one free to be so natural. So you see, Charlie was not doing very much of the Svengali hypnotic stuff.

When Edna sits on that railing, after being locked out of her home, one actually sees her soul harden. There is scarcely a movement, yet we see her crystalize into dumb, cynical, resigned despair.

And when she boards that train alone, believing that she has been deserted by her lover, just a lone unhappy girl in a deserted station at midnight, we get that quiet little bit of cynically hopeless resigned desperation with utter poignancy. No heroics, no heaving bosom, no tears and wailing, not even fear--just stark dumb cynical resignation.

But the Edna that can portray all that is the most placid, cheerful wholesome personality in real life. A thoroughly normal and very pretty woman with her emotions in comfortable control.

Many men have loved Edna but she never loses her head over them. There was the British major who was almost ready to sacrifice the British Empire for her during the war days. There was the handsome polo player whom gossip has tried to marry her to. And there was Charlie himself in bygone days.

But Edna is placidly, engagingly platonic with them all, just a soupcon of flirtatiousness, you understand, enough to be interesting, but no grandstand passions. I don't think she will ever reach the front page in that guise.

It is interesting to recall that she was a Nevada miner's daughter. She met Charlie as a quiet unpretentious little girl at a party in San Francisco, where they played spiritualism, table-turning and hypnotism.

Charlie vowed he could hypnotize little Edna and she consented. She became absolutely rigid and fell taut to the floor--giving Charlie the scare of his life.

Clever fooling--which promptly won Charlie's dramatic respect. He

invited her to come down to Los Angeles and see how pictures were made--and that was the beginning of her professional life.

Her first part was that of a nice inoffensive girl in "A Night Out"--in the making of which Charlie bullied her like a pickpocket. And her last comedy part was in "The Pilgrim"--still a nice quiet inoffensive little girl in the choir, and Charlie still bullying her like a pickpocket.

"I never knew what they were all about," laughs Edna. "But I know we were in the throes of the Mildred Harris affair during 'Shoulder Arms,' and the finale of it through 'The Kid,' and the Pola affair through 'The Pilgrim,' and the finale of that through the first days of 'A Woman of Paris,' and I guess that is how I keep my history dates in mind."

And she smiles placidly, a little wistfully perhaps, and trips off to a reducing treatment, waving me farewell. Reducing is the one thing Edna takes seriously. It entails lettuce lunches and sparse dinners and no breakfasts, iced tea. She says she has gained five pounds since they finished the picture--and Charlie does prefer them slim.

In the meantime she has bought a lovely new home and lives with mamma and sister on Fleetwood Drive.

* * * * *

January 3, 1924

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

[Interview with Edna Purviance following the shooting of Courtland Dines by Horace Greer]

"Mr. Dines and I were engaged--and yet we were not engaged, if you understand what I mean.

"He never gave me an engagement ring, but there was an understanding between us that we would be married. There was no date. We had not even considered any certain date for our wedding.

"We had been thus engaged, I should say, for five or six months."

Edna Purviance, in a fluffy silk garment of pink and white, leaned

wearily back against the piled up cushions of her bed. Her eyes were moist. She spoke with a visible effort.

"I met him when he first came here, about a year ago. There was a dinner or dance or something; I can't remember now. We were introduced and--and, well, I guess we rather liked each other.

"After that our friendship grew and grew. I am not ashamed to say that I am most terribly fond of him.

"We were together a great deal, of course. He was wonderful.

"About six months ago we entered into a mutual understanding which was the equivalent to an engagement to be married.

"We never considered an engagement ring necessary, but there was another reason why I did not one, and that was that we wanted to keep our engagement a secret--our secret.

"And now I suppose the world will know it."

Miss Purviance wore dark spectacles. She had apparently wept a great deal. It was yesterday mid-afternoon, but she said she had not slept since Courtland S. Dines, her fiancée, was shot down in his own apartment by Horace A. Greer.

As an indication of the mutual friendship which existed between herself and Dines, Miss Purviance cited a yachting trip taken some six months ago to Catalina Island.

"It was on the yacht of a man whose name I don't want to mention unless I have to," she said. "I can't see why any more people should be dragged into this affair. But he was a friend of Miss Normand and for that matter, of mine.

"He has a gorgeous yacht in the Los Angeles Harbor and during the summer he arranged a little party for a cruise to Catalina. There were he and Miss Normand, Mr. Dines and I, and the members of the yacht's crew and servants.

"We had a perfectly harmless cruise. We left the harbor one morning--I think it was a Saturday, and cruised direct to Catalina. The yacht was very spacious and marvelously equipped, and we docked that afternoon at Avalon.

"The next afternoon we came back to Los Angeles. The cruise was

entirely lacking in anything wrong or malicious. I understand that certain minds will draw inferences from the fact that there were just the four of us, but I will deny that there was the slightest ground for any inference of a malicious nature.

"It was simply and solely a weekend outing in which four respectable persons engaged. It was no more wrong than a hiking trip to the mountains, or a motor trip, to some place of recreation, and those are taken every day by thousands of people.

"And so we went to Catalina Island and returned and went about our respective businesses. But during this trip the deep friendship between Mr. Dines and myself was cemented more firmly. I think that is doubly true because during the whole trip he never failed to conduct himself as a perfect gentleman.

"The host had a small motion picture camera--one of those tiny pocket things. He took quite a number of pictures, and we all stood on the deck and struck attitudes--foolish, but a healthy outlet for high spirits.

"Around the studios we would call it 'clowning.' The pictures were taken when we were all in exuberant moods, and we struck all sorts of silly poses. I hope they will not be misunderstood."

As another indication of their affection, Miss Purviance mentioned that as a Christmas gift Mr. Dines sent her a jet "vanity" of a new pattern. He also sent her a gift on her birthday. She came down at last to the Yuletide seasonal festivities which had their tragic culmination in Dines' apartment.

They went out together on New Year's eve--to the Cocoanut Grove at the Ambassador. They were in a party of ten--three married couples, Dines and Miss Purviance. She declined to give the names of the guests "because," she said, "I don't feel that it is necessary for them to figure in this unfortunate thing."

"The party was not very exciting--in fact it was rather dull. This was not due to the other guests, but to the general spirit of oppression that seemed to prevail. However, it continued until 3 or 4 o'clock in the

morning, when Dines, she said, took her home. He kissed her good-night and went away.

"On New Year's Day," she said, "everybody was having 'open house,' as is the custom in Hollywood. We had made an engagement to meet for dinner that day. About 3 o'clock I went over to this apartment, and other people were there. In fact, his friends kept dropping in off and on all afternoon."

As in the other instance, she declined to give names.

"As soon as I got in the house," she said, "I phoned Mabel--Mabel Normand, and asked her to come over. She said she would be there right away. In about half an hour, I should judge, she arrived. I think the time was between 3:30 and 4 o'clock.

"The chauffeur, Kelly, drove her over. I heard her tell him she would call him when she wanted him to return. He went away.

"We sat around and entertained the people who called, and talked till about 7 o'clock. Mr. Dines had just mentioned that he would have to go dress for dinner. He was wearing a soft suit of some kind.

"It would be foolish to say that there was nothing to drink during the afternoon, of course there was. But there was not a great deal to drink, and none of us drank very much. I know that Mabel was not intoxicated, and neither was I, and neither was Mr. Dines.

"When he said he must dress for dinner, I stepped into the room just off the living room and took out my powder puff and started to powder my nose. Mabel stepped in just behind me.

"'Don't be selfish,' she said, 'let me use it too.'

"And at that instant, without a preliminary warning of any kind, there were three sharp shots from the other room!

"Mabel and I ran out immediately. There was no one in sight but Mr. Dines. The front door was closed. We had not heard it open nor close, nor any peal of the bell, nor any rap at the door.

"Mr. Dines was standing there, smiling in a sort of funny way.

"'Well,' he said, 'I got plugged.'

"He continued to stand there with his hand over his white shirt front

smiling. Then all at once, as I watched the fingers over his breast, I saw the blood begin to seep through. I am not sure what I did then, nor what Mabel did, nor what was said, if anything.

"Mr. Dines began to totter, but he never stopped smiling. I think we ran to his side, Mabel on one side and I on the other, and led him to the bedroom. He was getting weak. We laid him on the bed and tore off most of his clothing. We put on his dressing gown, or bathrobe, or whatever it was, that we found in the closet.

"I am not sure what we did next. I know we tried to stop the bleeding, but it would not stop. Almost at once, it seems to me now, the ambulance and the police were there.

"I never saw Kelly, or Greer, or whatever his name is, from the time he first brought Miss Normand to the house until the time he was brought into the room with us at the police station."

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Six

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the sixth day after Taylor's body was discovered.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922
LOS ANGELES RECORD

Did Murderer Force Taylor to "Hold 'Em Up"?

That William D. Taylor, murdered movie director, was held at the point of a pistol before he was murdered was the theory expressed by detectives Tuesday.

In support of this theory, the police bring out these points:

Taylor's shirt was pulled somewhat out of his belt. Holding his hands in the air while menaced with a revolver would account for that.

The slayer evidently held the gun within three or four inches of Taylor's body, as powder marks on the clothing indicate.

As Taylor fell, the assassin might have caught him and laid him on his back. The fact that there were no bruises on Taylor's head or body, which would have been caused had he fallen, accounts for this conjecture.

Having his hands in the air would explain why the bullet missed Taylor's arm. The assassin evidently shot from the hip, the way of a two-gun bad man, the detectives point out, thus sending the bullet on its diagonal course through the ribs, heart and into the neck.

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February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

...Guards surrounded the home of Mary Miles Minter, prominent film star and close friend of Taylor, Tuesday.

Captain David L. Adams and the squad of eight police detectives who are working on the mystery, scattered to various parts of the city following a conference. They were working on a number of clues, any one of which may develop into something tangent.

Before the detectives left police headquarters they subjected Henry Peavey, Taylor's Negro valet, to another questioning, but the valet was unable to tell them anything new.

The four private detectives, who guarded the home of Mary Miles Minter on North Hobart boulevard, shooed all visitors away. They are supposed to have been hired by Miss Minter...

A cigarette stub carelessly dropped in front of a garage at Temple and Hill streets may lead to the discovery of the murderer of Taylor.

If the police could have laid hands on the man who dropped the bit of

paper wrapped around a few shreds of tobacco the mystery that has baffled the entire country would be solved today. But the man slipped through their hands with a margin of only a few minutes between him and capture.

The smoker, an indistinct figure, lounged in the doorway of the garage in the darkness of night. A man drove in with his automobile and the smoker stepped aside, casting away the cigarette.

The driver, engaged in negotiating the doorway, did not once glance...

But a few minutes later a policeman picked up the cigarette stub and examined it.

It was gold-tipped and bore the special design seen only on the cigarettes made to order for Taylor.

Nino Andrinie, editor of "La Patria," an Italian newspaper, was the motorist who drove into the garage while the man was lounging in the doorway.

The policeman who found the cigarette stub awakened the editor at his apartments in the Alhambra a few hours later and questioned him. Andrinie could not give a good description of the man he saw.

The police theory that Edward F. Sands, former secretary of the movie director may know who committed the murder, was strengthened greatly by the cigarette clue...

"If we can find Sands," declared Captain David L. Adams, in charge of the police investigation, "this mystery will be solved. Unless he can account for his whereabouts Wednesday night he will be under the strongest possible suspicion."

Telegraphic orders for the arrest of a man believed to be Sands were sent to Carlin, Nev., where a man answering his description is under surveillance. The arrest was expected today...

The startling theory that Sands is in reality Taylor's missing brother, Dennis, was scouted as impossible today by Mrs. Ada Deane-Tanner, divorced wife of the missing man.

Mrs. Deane-Tanner, when shown a photograph of Sands at her Monrovia home, pointed out points of dissimilarity which led to this theory, developed by detectives working on the baffling murder mystery, to be discarded.

Sands is short and stocky, with plump, round face. Dennis Deane-Tanner was slender like his brother, and his clear-cut features much resembled those of the murdered director. Besides, Mrs. Deane-Tanner explained, her husband's nose had been broken in athletics, which gave him a noticeable mark.

Neither could there be any possibility, according to her, that Taylor was her missing husband, playing a dual role. She and other friends who knew both brothers in New York, saw and talked to Taylor in Los Angeles and could not be deceived about his identity...

So far two reported "sons" of Taylor have been heard from and are being traced. One of the young men, about 25 years of age, introduced himself as a son of the eminent director when he took some manuscript to F. H. McDowell, associate editor of "Screenland," about two weeks ago. The police today were looking for the young man at the address which he left with McDowell.

The other youth who claimed to be Taylor's son, was interviewed by a man who knew the movie director when the boy registered for war service at Columbia University, New York. The young man was reported as being very bitter towards Taylor, cursing at mention of his name. He did not say why he hated the man whom he represented as his father.

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February 7, 1922
LOS ANGELES HERALD

...As regarded the statement often made that Taylor was exclusively a man's man, it was said today by his former employees that such was not the case; that Taylor on numerous occasions talked to one screen actress for 30 minutes at a time over the telephone. He would also send lengthy letters to her in the middle of the day. He was said to have had many women friends.

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February 7, 1922

NEW ORLEANS ITEM

Los Angeles--...A pale pink night-gown, of filmy silk, positively identified as the property of a certain famous movie star whose name has already been mentioned in connection with the death of Taylor, is now in the possession of the police and may play a dominant part in a solution of the mystery of Taylor's death.

The nightgown, previously described to the police by servants of the slain director, disappeared from Taylor's apartment on the day after the murder, but was found Monday after a diligent search by the authorities now investigating the tragedy...

The star to whom the night-gown is believed to belong, is not a comedienne.

A three-letter laundry mark was the clue to ownership of the dainty, lace-trimmed garment. It had been kept in a box in one of the dresser drawers of Taylor's bedroom, according to Henry Peavey, Negro valet of the director.

A police detective who had been working independently on the case brought the garment itself into headquarters Monday, with what he declared was positive identification of its owner.

Injection of the name of this movie star into the mystery enlarges the field of suspects--for at the present time the police view every intimate friend of the woman who were known to be close associates of Taylor, as a potential enemy and possible murderer through the jealousy which Taylor's attachment may have aroused...

The kings of the movie world are determined that the murder must be solved. Jesse Lasky, head of the Lasky-Famous Players, declares that the offer of \$1,000,000 for the solution of the mystery is no idle statement. The leaders of the industry feel that the movie business is getting a distinct black eye as the sensational details come out. It is their hope that it can be determined that Taylor was murdered for money, or by a burglar, and no money is being spared to accomplish this aim.

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February 7, 1922

NEW ORLEANS ITEM

New York--An almost unbelievable parallel of circumstances, uncanny in the faithfulness of detail, exists between the Taylor murder case in Los Angeles and the Elwell tragedy in New York of nearly two years ago.

Joseph B. Elwell, noted bridge whist expert, was found dead at his desk in his living room, from a revolver shot. The weapon was not found and the door was locked.

Taylor, noted movie director was found dead under exactly the same circumstances.

Elwell's body was discovered by his housekeeper: Taylor's by his valet. Cigarette butts were left behind by the slayer in each case.

Both men were living apart from their wives, but other women had entered their later careers with tremendous influence upon their actions. Both men lived in luxurious surroundings.

On the morning of the Elwell murder a young woman in frantic fear went to Elwell's house and obtained from the housekeeper certain lingerie which had been in the murdered man's dresser drawer.

A pink silk night gown disappeared from Taylor's bedroom on the day after his murder, according to the statement of his valet. It has now been located and is in the hands of the police.

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February 7, 1922

PORTLAND NEWS

Elko, Nev.--Two additional men were placed under surveillance here today, suspected of being Edward F. Sands, missing "valet" wanted in Los Angeles in connection with the William D. Taylor murder.

They arrived in Elko last night and took rooms at a hotel here, saying they had come "from the west." Both registered as being from Los Angeles.

Officers guarded their rooms in the hotel here throughout the morning. A third had been under surveillance previously.

"But we are afraid none of the men is Sands," the sheriff said. "One, however, tallies pretty well, generally, with the description given us."

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

Los Angeles--Detectives rushed into the haunts of the "dope" peddlers of Hollywood this afternoon with orders to take into custody a man known as "Dirty" Diamond, reported chief of the "drug ring" that has made hundreds of thousands of dollars and scores of victims of narcotics in the wilder young motion picture set.

Led by the same mysterious woman informant those tales took them to the "dope" dens, the police declared that Diamond could direct them to the slayer of William Desmond Taylor and tell the story behind the weird mystery of Alvarado St.

Their search began when a long-distance telephone call from Carlin, Nev., informed them that a suspect there, believed to have been Edward F. Sands, alias Edwin Fitz-Strathmore [sic], Taylor's former valet and secretary, had been captured and had proved to be another man...

The Carlin suspect, who was accompanied by another man, had brought suspicion on himself by his mysterious actions, which concluded when he locked himself in a house on the outskirts of the little mining town. He was surrounded there by sheriff's men and surrendered.

The search for the man known as Diamond was given added importance by the police because of the feeling from the first that sooner or later the true story of the slaying must come from inside the dope ring.

Meanwhile investigators seemed to have cleared up at least one angle of the slaying mystery--that was the sudden disappearance from his hotel of a wealthy young New Yorker the day after the murder. This was a man once reported engaged to Mary Miles Minter. It was theorized at the time that he had slain Taylor because of his jealousy over her friendship with the director.

Today, however, it was learned that an affair of another sort caused his disappearance--at the request of the hotel management. On the night of the murder, according to this information, it was said the New Yorker, with an actor of the movies, were entertaining rather informally two women in the New Yorker's room. Contraband liquor played no small part in the entertainment.

The hotel detective, summoned by the other patrons of the hotel, asked that the women leave. He was assaulted by the two men...

While waiting an opportunity to interview Miss Minter detectives followed the trail of still another woman--the cool slim figure of one of filmdom's leading actresses that stepped out of the drug-frenzied setting of Hollywood's feverish "dope" parties with a new version of the strange killing.

She slipped from the sordid background as she had left a score of times the scenes of mad revelry--to make her way under the cloak of night to the home of the man who was killed. He was her lover.

One of the most noted of the screen's favorites--and one of the pitiful number who have become thralls of the dope ring--the police say, led by now spectacular developments, believe that the film beauty may be the assassin.

Her motive, the police informants declare, was a strange infatuation for the quiet, well-mannered director turned to burning rage by her jealousy of other women known to have visited the Alvarado Ave. home--once considered the quarters of a recluse bachelor and now known as the abode of secret love.

Detectives directed their search toward the actress following the stories of neighbors of the Taylor home, who told of her visits in the early hours of the morning.

These tales were verified in the half-whispers that sounded in the

haunts of the drug peddlers, among whom the secrets of the stars that shine on the celluloid firmament are matters of everyday gossip. They know it as part of their infamous trade.

So impressed were the authorities with the sight of the latest will-o'-the-wisp across the swamp of scandal and gossip revealed with Taylor's killing that they were ready to construct their entire theory of the crime, including the time it was done.

Generally it had been accepted that Taylor was shot half an hour after Mabel Normand had ended her visit with the director, a visit enlivened by a discussion of classic literature and gin cocktails. The time was placed at about 8:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Now, it is believed that Taylor may have been shot down by the beauty of the screen at an hour after midnight.

The associations of Taylor and the woman were mildly known to Hollywood filmdom. That is, what might be called their daylight acquaintance. Hollywood did not even raise its jaded eyebrows. There had been too many women in Taylor's life.

They did not know of her early morning visits to Alvarado St. They might have wondered why she, looked upon as a queen of the delirious revels where ether and cocaine were blended with morphine and opium, left these "parties" at an hour considered early in Hollywood. But they were used to strange behaviors.

There was a bit of gossip when it was learned that the young woman, in a burst of drug-inspired confidence, had boasted that she intended to marry "Billy" Taylor.

"He's mine!" she said, "and he knows it."

Hollywood smiled tolerantly.

"There must be something about Bill Taylor," it said.

On New Year's Eve and far into New Year's day, the advent of the fresh year was hailed by Hollywood with a wild and drunken shout. Old timers hereabouts say that the celebration in its wildness surpassed anything ever seen in these parts. Out of it since have grown twenty scandals and domestic

shipwrecks.

Taylor and the woman who boasted that she would marry him quarreled violently at the "party" they attended. So violently that they separated on the spot.

Half crazed with the drug she had taken the woman ran in a rage to her car and drove to her home. In the morning, according to the dope peddlers--remember that was part of their trade--she repented and telephoned Taylor.

Taylor, when the woman left, seemed turned to a man of stone. At last he shook himself together, formally bade farewell to others of the party and stalked to his car. When he reached home, according to the stories the police heard from the dens of the dope peddlers, he broke down and wept. When daylight came, he was off on one of his solitary walks into the foothills.

He returned just before the woman telephoned. He refused to go to the 'phone when he learned who it was.

Later, it was stated, she made several efforts to reconciliation. She 'phoned. She sent friends to intervene. She wrote impassioned letters--letters for which the police are searching.

But Taylor was through with her. There had been other women in his life. There still were. He was seen in their company in public. With them he went to "parties" in private studios; friends of the jilted actress sought to confront her with gossip about Taylor's carrying-on with other women.

Then came the night of Taylor's death--the night that Mabel Normand, once reported engaged to him, visited Alvarado Street.

That night, as they say in the movie subtitles, the film queen again was at a dope "party," morose and embittered, according to the police information. To her side came one of her consoling friends.

"What a fine dumb-bell you are to be crying about that fellow," she said. "Why, he's got a woman at his house right now."

"That's a lie," cried the star.

"All right," said the other. "But if I wanted to, I could tell you her name."

For more than an hour, according to the information given the police, the young woman who had boasted she would marry "Bill" Taylor brooded. Then without a word to any one, she left.

The police believe it possible that this woman, with the fumes of the drug fanning the flame of fierce jealousy that burned within her, armed herself and went to the home of Taylor ready to demand his love and ready to kill him if he refused.

And it was upon this theory that they were at work today. They found their inquiry blocked among the moving picture people who knew Taylor best and who knew, too, of his affair with the woman of the screen under suspicion.

Very close-mouthed, these garrulous ones of the films have become. They still talk about "Bill" Taylor as the "man's man" and the one who "played a lone hand."

"Most of them are afraid to talk," declared one of the Los Angeles detectives who has had wide experience in the affairs of the Hollywood studios. "They know that if once one of them starts talking all of them are likely to talk and all of them will be mixed up either in this affair or others that are worse."...

An apparent timidity existed among the officials, also, about confronting a certain Los Angeles man of wealth, with an unsavory reputation even where the "parties" became wildest, with a demand for an accounting of his whereabouts on the night Taylor was slain. This man, it was stated, was known to be in love with one of the women interested in Taylor and his car was said to have been seen that night in the vicinity of the Taylor home...

Incidentally, Miss Normand is making arrangements to have her telephone number changed and kept a secret. All sorts of impossible people have been phoning her and annoying her, she declared, since her name was mentioned in connection with the Taylor tragedy.

The mystery of the silken nightgown, the delicate, filmy thing of peach color that Taylor was supposed to have kept scented and folded in his dresser drawer, remained a mystery.

The dainty garment apparently had disappeared, although at one time it was reported in the hands of the police. Henry Peavey, the Taylor houseman, is said to have declared that the gown bore an embroidered monogram. He also is reported to have disclosed the initials worked into the monogram. Another rumor stated that the garment had been identified through a laundry mark.

But the nightgown itself had mysteriously disappeared.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

...In an effort to aid in Sands' arrest Charles Eyton, general manager of the film organization with which Taylor was formerly connected, today ordered the printing of 10,000 circulars giving a full description of the fugitive. These will be sent broadcast throughout the nation, it was announced...

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

Pauline Payne

Washington Times

Miss Normand Denies That Taylor Attended Movieland Drug Orgy

Los Angeles--"William Desmond Taylor never in his life attended a 'dope party,' And I feel sure from my knowledge of the man that he certainly would never have tolerated the use of narcotics at a party in his home.

"As for the mysterious pink nightie which the valet says was in his house, I have not the slightest idea to whom it could have belonged.

"In fact I knew practically nothing of the private life of Mr. Taylor, although he and I were splendid pals."

Such were the statements of Mabel Normand, cinema star, made to me today as she sat curled up on a great divan of the luxurious living room of her palatial apartments and spoke of her friendship with the slain director.

"Because I was a dear friend of Mr. Taylor, naturally I feel deeply over the catastrophe and am eager to assist the police in any way I can," Miss Normand continued. "But it does seem a little unfair that my name should be so prominently connected with his. Mr. Taylor had many friends besides myself.

"Please say that I did not return to Mr. Taylor's home after the tragedy to get back my letters. I returned there with three detectives, at their request, to describe the appearance of the room when I left there early in the evening prior to Mr. Taylor's murder.

"There is nothing of any interest in the letters. I only wish that they could be found and published, too, so that people could see how uninteresting they were.

"I can say with perfect candor that I know of no woman who could possibly have been jealous of my friendship with Mr. Taylor.

"Nor do I know any man who could have been jealous of me.

"I knew nothing of Mr. Taylor's past life until after this tragedy.

"I was particularly fond of Mr. Taylor, because he was so sympathetic."

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

LONG BEACH PRESS

...Sheriff Al Manning contends that Taylor was killed because of jealousy over a woman.

In support of his jealousy theory Manning has as evidence a pink silk nightgown found in a drawer of Taylor's dresser the night after the murder. The "nightie" was established as the property of an internationally known film star through the initials of a private laundry mark. Henry Peavey, Taylor's Negro valet, when shown the garment, admitted that his employer had

had it for six months.

When police questioned the owner of the nightgown, she became hysterical. She was at one time reported to have been engaged to a young New York man who, according to gossip about the film world, was jealous of Taylor. It became known several days ago that police were conducting a quiet search for a New York broker.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Los Angeles, Feb. 7--...Meantime the Sheriff's office has announced than an arrest will be made before morning and that the person arrested will not be Sands.

The "woman" theory was strengthened by Mabel Normand. She denied that she was infatuated with Taylor or Taylor with her, but admitted it might have appeared so to a jealous person and that "it might be another girl." Despite her disavowal of love for Taylor, Miss Normand collapsed at his funeral, held in the procathedral here today.

An actress who had been severely grilled a few nights ago was questioned again today. It is believed her sweetheart may know something of the murder. He was jealous of Taylor, it is said.

The "tip" that Sands was hiding near Carlin, Nev., was proved false. The man was not Sands. He was much shorter, and he had a wooden leg.

It was reported that new evidence as to the activities of the narcotic vendors, who are plentiful in Hollywood, had promised surprising developments, but there was nothing definite.

The police were looking for a man said to be known as "Dirty Joe," who they believe can tell something about Taylor's personal habits, about the woman who went to call at his cozy bachelor apartments, when the shades had been drawn, and about the men reputed to be jealous of him.

Some of the actors and actresses who have been patronizing this peddler

are being sought, the police believing it possible they may talk "if rightly handled."

Mary Miles Minter, the film star, who became hysterical when she heard of Taylor's death, has shut herself up in her home and four private detectives stand on guard to keep everybody away.

Since it became known that Mary had written to Taylor, she will see nobody.

A letter with her butterfly crest, signed, "Yours, always, Mary," was found in one of the numerous books in the Taylor library.

"Dearest," it said, "I love you, I love you, I love you."

There were nine little crosses for nine little kisses and the big cross with an exclamation point at the bottom of the letter.

Mary has not admitted she sent this letter. Neither has she denied it. She has denied, however, that she loved Taylor in the sense the word is usually used. She loved him as a big, strong, kind man, she says, a brilliant, courteous, charming "uncle." She never was engaged to him. He never made love to her.

Henry Peavey, Taylor's negro valet and cook, was questioned again today, but the only new thing he told was that Taylor kept a tiny lace handkerchief and that he used to kiss it often reverently.

It may have been one sent him by his daughter, Ethel Daisy, who is coming to Los Angeles to attend the burial. It may have belonged to any one of many beautiful women.

The handkerchief, so far as the police can learn, has nothing to do with the murder. But then, they say, neither has the missing pink silk nightie, for which they are still searching. The mystery of the nightie's disappearance simply adds to the mystery of the case.

It was reported that the new county grand jury may be given this case within a few days.

"We are progressing with the case," said Captain Adams, "even if only by the process of elimination. We have not yet made any arrests, or taken anyone on suspicion, but we are gradually getting out of all the false trails

that have been hiding the real path. I believe it all rests with Sands. Once we have him, we'll have everything."...

* * * * *

February 8, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Declaring that he called William D. Taylor at 7:55 o'clock Wednesday night and, receiving no answer, went to the apartment of the film director, arriving there at 8:15 o'clock, rang the doorbell and still met with no response, Howard Fellows, chauffeur for the murdered director, last night definitely fixed the time within which the crime must have been committed and added facts regarding as of first magnitude importance in their bearing upon the crime.

Strangely enough, this young man, who had been Taylor's driver for nearly six months, had not been questioned at length until yesterday, when an Examiner representative called on him at his home, 1622 Shatto Place.

He is a brother of Harry Fellows, who was Taylor's assistant director.

Yesterday Detective Sergeant Tom Zeigler took Howard to the Taylor home, 404-B South Alvarado street. He was partially identified by a resident of the neighborhood as the person he had seen seated in a car on the night of the murder near the scene of the crime and about the time it was committed.

Fellows denied this and convinced Zeigler that the man was mistaken.

One of Fellows' most interesting statements, other than that relating to his movements and observations on the night of the assassination, had to do with an alleged quarrel between Taylor and Mabel Normand.

"I was driving Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand from the Ambassador Hotel, where they had attended a New Year's Eve party, to her home." said Fellows.

"On the way they had a quarrel. I don't know what it was about, but both were very much excited.

"Mr. Taylor took Miss Normand home and then returned to his apartment. Upon arriving there he broke down and wept.

"On the following morning he did up some jewelry in a package and took it to Miss Normand at her home."

Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored valet, confirms this.

"Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand were very affectionate," continued Fellows. Questioned independently, Peavey said that Taylor often caressed her.

As to these matters Fellows spoke casually, but when he entered upon the events of the night of February 1, his narrative became astounding both as to its content and because he had never told it before.

"I left the house (Mr. Taylor's) about 4:30 Wednesday afternoon," Fellows began.

"Mr. Taylor told me he might be going out in the evening and instructed to be sure to telephone by 7:30. I went to the home of a young lady friend and was there until 7:55. I recall the time accurately because I had it on my mind to call Mr. Taylor and ask him if he would need the car.

"I called him two or three times before that hour, but received no reply. I left the house of my girl friend at five minutes to eight and drove directly to Mr. Taylor's.

"I reached there about a quarter past eight.

"There was a light in the living room. I was surprised that Mr. Taylor should be home and not have answered the telephone.

"I rang the doorbell. Silence. I rang again. Still no response. I must have rung three or four times. Then I concluded: 'Well, he has some one there and doesn't want to answer.'

"So I put up the car. I was around back of the house, and it is peculiar that persons in the neighborhood should have heard me walking and not have heard me put up the car. I made a good deal of noise doing this, as the garage is difficult to get into, and I guess I must have backed the car up four or five times.

"I am satisfied that I am the man Mrs. Douglas MacLean saw standing on the porch and leaving the house. I wore a cap and a raincoat.

"I noticed no cars in the immediate vicinity and saw no one who aroused my suspicions.

"Naturally, I am convinced that both when I phoned and when I rang the doorbell, Mr. Taylor was lying there on the floor murdered."

Taking the testimony of Fellows and Miss Normand together, it is now possible to fix the time of the murder within fifteen minutes.

Miss Normand said she left Taylor between 7:30 and 7:45 o'clock.

Fellows called him at 7:55.

The murder was committed between Miss Normand's leave-taking and Fellows' phoning.

Hence, for the first time, the police have a picture of the murder as it relates to the time when and in which it was committed.

Before Fellows' statement became available there was no conclusive evidence as to the time the bullet of the assassin struck the film director down. Testimony as to the shot being heard was so vague as to be unconvincing. It could not be said with finality that the murder did not occur at midnight or at any other hour of the night.

The acts of the drama leading to the murder must have been brief. It would appear, indeed, that there were no preliminaries, that the intruder, concealed in the room, stepped out and fired the shot.

It is therefore deduced that it was a premeditated crime and not one precipitated by a quarrel or any sort of scene more than of momentary duration.

One group of police investigators and most of the deputy sheriffs working on the case are now convinced that the visit of Mabel Normand was the immediate antecedent occasion for the crime.

This theory naturally takes for granted that Miss Normand had not the slightest intimation that her dear friend was to be shot to death, but officers cannot help but believe that the murderer found the way for his crime paved in some way by the visit of Miss Normand.

There was another new angle to the case late yesterday upon which two of the ablest detectives on the force are now working. A citizen of established reputation gave the details to a high police official yesterday, the story running substantially as follows:

A young man who has come into touch with motion picture people in a business way, though not one of them, was infatuated with an actress prominently mentioned in the investigation.

Shortly before the time of the murder, that is between 7:30 and 8 o'clock on the night of February 1, this citizen saw the young man in question near Taylor's house. He wore a cap and a long coat.

Since last Thursday he has not been seen either at his home or place of business.

This clue is regarded as important because the elements of motive and time are supplied.

The young man is said to have a violent temper and to have strongly resented innuendoes affecting the reputation of the actress whom he worshipped.

Into the William D. Taylor murder last night was injected an element which the police regard as of startling import.

This was the revelation, according to information, that a man's handkerchief, not the possession of Taylor himself, was found in the director's living room the morning after he was slain.

The conclusion that the handkerchief did not belong to Taylor is furnished in this report--

It bore the initial "S."

A detective is said to have picked up the article from the floor. He glanced at it, saw the initial, and for the moment, other matters engrossing him, he gave the discovery little thought.

For several hours all was confusion in the Taylor rooms. Detectives, motion picture actors, reporters and photographers invaded the apartment.

Yesterday the detective recalled the incident, remembering distinctly that there was a single initial embroidered on the square of linen.

The disclosure proved to be of profound interest, as officers immediately started upon an investigation with this as the subject matter and the owner the end of the search.

What gives the discovery special significance is that the handkerchief

was soiled. So says the detective, who recalls this circumstance clearly.

The handkerchief was lying on the floor near where Taylor's body lay outstretched.

Now, Taylor, according to all the descriptions of him furnished by his friends, was a neat man and would not have had a soiled article like this lying around.

To add to the probability that it came from without rather than from within the home, may be mentioned the fact that Henry Peavey, colored valet, had straightened up the director's living room before leaving for the evening.

Peavey yesterday informed the police that the handkerchief certainly was not there when he left. He also stated that Taylor possessed nothing resembling this.

Hence, it is a deduction that a man having a handkerchief bearing the initial "S" called on Taylor and was in the apartment between the time Peavey left for the night and the discovery of the crime the following morning.

In reconstructing the murder as suggested by this discovery the police picture the assassin as taking his handkerchief from his pocket during a conversation with Taylor and of so insecurely placing it back that it fell from his pocket.

Or--and this is another sketch to fit the hypothesis--he may have used the handkerchief after the murder and, either in haste or agitation, dropped it.

It is now of the utmost importance, in the view of the police, that this handkerchief be recovered. Or, failing in this, that its owner be identified.

Some one took the article from the living room where it was carelessly placed by the detective who found it.

Did that some one have an interest in hiding what might have been incriminating evidence?

Its appearance, they say, would have precluded any mere souvenir hunter from having taken it. However, it is believed to be beyond question that

some one surreptitiously picked this thing up and concealed it in his pocket.

Whether or not it is of the huge possible importance with which it is now regarded, this new story has sent the police hunting in a new direction.

They are looking for the owner of that handkerchief.

A long list of film folk, celebrated and obscure, whose names begin with that initial, was being canvassed last night by officers.

Little importance was attached to the pink silk nightgown found in the director's apartments. This, it was learned, had been laundered only once or twice and bore no initials or other marks by which its ownership might be determined.

Information came to headquarters yesterday that a man had been seen walking back and forth in the rear of Taylor's home in the Westlake district about two weeks ago. He was seen there on at least two nights, pacing up and down the alley and, apparently, watching the house.

There is, of course, no means of knowing who he was or why he was there, but the theory of a hired assassin enters to account for his presence and stealthy vigil.

Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill yesterday started a systematic questioning of all persons who might contribute helpful facts.

One of those put down for a thorough course of grilling is an actress who has not been mentioned in the case. Officers called at her studio yesterday, but found that she was out on location at a distant point in Southern California.

The collapse of a noted screen star mentioned frequently in connection with the case yesterday prevented the police from further questioning her. They had a point to clear up, and the information, it was learned, could only come from her.

Her attorney yesterday took command of her affairs and notified callers that she was bedridden and in neither physical nor mental condition to discuss the case.

The cause of the actress' breakdown is attributed in part to the strain of innumerable police interviews, but chiefly to the loss of a friend who,

she says, was very dear to her.

It developed yesterday that few members of the picture colony believe Edward F. Sands, discharged secretary-valet of the director, to have been the murderer.

Particularly in the Famous Players-Lasky is this conviction strong. Few of them knew Sands personally, but those who had seen him around Taylor's apartments now recollect him as a man who might have been guilty of petty crimes, such as robbery, but not of murder.

It occasioned little surprise yesterday when the sheriff of Elko, Nev., wired that the man seen there for several days and supposed to be Sands had been questioned and gave such a clear account of himself that the sheriff ordered his release.

Detective Ed King this morning will ask the District Attorney for a complaint charging Sands with the murder of Taylor.

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February 8, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Personal letters written by Mabel Normand, film actress to William Desmond Taylor, slain motion-picture director, were returned to her late yesterday, according to information in the possession of three officers working on the murder investigation. These missing letters, which have figured largely among the puzzling phases of the case, have never been in the hands of the police, it was declared.

On suggestions of a thorough grand jury inquiry into the matter, the person said to have had these letters returned them to her, the three officers said.

But a representative of Miss Normand, who collapsed yesterday at the funeral of the man whose home she left only a few minutes before he was shot in the back, stated she had not received them at a late hour last night.

Captain of Detectives Adams asserted again that the police have never

had any letters written by her or by Mary Miles Minter, another actress, whose love for Mr. Taylor has never been denied by her. These letters, couched in terms of endearment for the director, also were returned, according to the officers' report.

Miss Minter, who has been ill, had no statement to make concerning the report. Her attorney said she did not have them...

Deputy Sheriff Bell, working in connection with a "lead" from Sheriff Traeger, made a mysterious trip during the afternoon and upon his return went into conference with Undersheriff Biscailuz and Superintendent of Criminal Investigation Manning. Mr. Biscailuz declined to divulge the nature of the inquiry, but declared he has every reason to believe they are on the right track and that the murder will not slip into the unsolved class.

Detective Sergeants Cato and Cahill spent the morning and part of the afternoon eliminating from serious consideration a "tip" given Monday night by C. M. Meister, chauffeur for the Yellow Taxicab Company, who told the officers a lurid story of four persons and their mysterious activities near the scene of the murder on South Alvarado street last Wednesday night, the time the shooting occurred.

Cato and Cahill declared yesterday they are convinced the episode mentioned has no bearing on the case, but they investigated it thoroughly before discarding it...

Information tending to connect a motion-picture director, thus far not mentioned in any way with the official inquiry, with the mysterious slaying of Mr. Taylor in his bachelor apartments was received by two of the detectives late in the day. They left on a hurried trip which kept them away from the police station many hours.

Although they were reticent about the new "lead" it was learned they had discovered witnesses who related a quarrel asserted to have occurred, between Mr. Taylor and the new suspect.

An Edward Sands, at first believed to be the man about whom the country-wide search has centered, was questioned for a considerable time yesterday by Detective Sergeants Herman Cline and Murphy. Mr. Sands, a young man whose

description answered in a general way to that of the suspect, recently became captain of bellboys in a fashionable hotel.

A letter addressed to him was noted, and since he had been employed at the hotel only a few days, someone's suspicions were aroused. Following the clue given them, the officers investigated.

Mr. Sands gave a straightforward account of his whereabouts for the last few years and declared he did not know any Edward F. Sands. He explained that his middle name was Edward but that he always used it as a first name. In the hope that Mr. Sands might have known something of the family of the man wanted, the officers questioned him for an hour at the detective bureau. No information of value was obtained, it was stated.

The Sheriff's office, which is conducting a complete inquiry into all clues received by the county officer holds the belief that Sands, who has been a fugitive from justice for many months because of asserted grand larceny and forgery, has no knowledge of the actual murder.

Those officers, as well as some of those working out of the police detective bureau, adhere more closely than ever to the theory that Mr. Taylor, an outstanding figure in the motion-picture industry, was slain by a jealous rival for the love of a film actress...

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February 8, 1922

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 7--...Detectives ridiculed a theory advanced today that Sands may have been Dennis Tanner, a missing brother of the slain man who disappeared in 1912. Tanner, if alive, would be considerably more than 40, it was said, while Sands age is 25.

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February 8, 1922

Los Angeles, Feb. 7--...Bell and Manning declare that the police theory, fixing the murder upon Sands, Taylor's former secretary, is erroneous.

"The man who killed Taylor is right here in Los Angeles," declared Bell. "We are not shooting blind. We know what and who we are after. Before another day is passed we will have action on the murder."

The county investigators are working on the theory that a woman is at the bottom of the mysterious murder.

The chief evidence unearthed during the day is a letter and a bit of celluloid film.

The letter was received by Arthur Koetchu, Assistant State's Attorney General. It was received from a woman and, according to Koetchu, has a direct bearing on the case. It recounted that the writer overheard a conversation at Second street and Bunker Hill avenue on the night of the tragedy.

One of the motorists wore a cap and muffler, it was stated.

The informant overheard the men conversing in low, excited tones, the letter states.

"Now that we're in for it," one of them is said to have told "the man in the muffler."

They separated, going in different directions in two automobiles. But the occupants lost some small articles in their haste, the letter states. One of these was a small strip of motion picture film, apparently part of a scenic reel depicting the Grand Canyon. In the strip was this sub-title, apparently only a sinister coincident:

"A deep and brooding mystery seems to hover over this great scar on the face of nature."

Taylor had several reels of pictures stored in his home. Detective George Conteres is going through them with Public Administrator Frank Bryson to ascertain whether or not the strip of film is part of Taylor's collection of scenics.

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February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Here is another unsigned love letter, in cipher, found in the effects of William D. Taylor, the motion picture director. This letter would indicate the writer's deep love for Taylor. The code is known to thousands of youngsters:

"What shall I call you, you wonderful man. You are standing on the lot, the idol of an adoring company. You have just come over and put your coat on my chair. I want to go away with you, up in the hills or anywhere just so we'd be alone--all alone. In a beautiful little woodland lodge you'd be cook (as I can only make tea) and fetch the water and build the fire.

"Wouldn't it be glorious to sit in a big comfy couch by a cozy warm fire with the wind whistling outside trying to harmonize with the faint sweet strains of music coming from our victrola. And then you'd have to get up and take off the record. Of course I don't really mean that, dear. Did you really suppose I intended you to take care of me like a baby?

Oh, no, for this is my part, I'd sweep and dust (they make the sweetest little dust caps, you know) and tie fresh ribbons on the snowy white curtains and feed the birds and fix the flowers, and, oh, yes, set the table and help you wash the dishes and then in my spare time I'd darn your socks.

I'd go to my room and put on something soft and flowing, then I'd lie on the couch and wait for you. I might fall asleep for a fire always makes me drowsy--then I'd wake to find two strong arms around me and two dear lips pressed on mine in a long sweet kiss---

(The last paragraph of this letter is being withheld by The Examiner from publication at this time.)

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February 8, 1922

Crowd Storms Church Doors at Taylor Funeral
Women Faint in Battle for Admission

Ten thousand persons paid final tribute to William Desmond Taylor yesterday afternoon.

They stood with bared heads as the casket was removed from St. Paul's Pro-Cathedral, a solid, packed mass of humanity which extended from the church doors across Olive street, filled that thoroughfare from Fifth to Sixth streets, and overflowing into Pershing Square.

A squad of police officers, under command of Sergeant J. A. McCaleb, including a number of mounted officers, had great difficulty in restraining the huge throng, and the famous picture stars who attended the service found themselves passing through a solid aisle of curiosity seekers, jostling and pushing each other in frantic efforts to catch a glimpse of the celebrities.

Most of them, however, including Constance Talmadge, Mary Miles Minter and others came through a little used side door half an hour before the services, which began at 2 o'clock.

Mabel Normand, escorted by several friends, hatted and furred so that her features were entirely obscured, came a few moments before the ceremonies.

After the church, which has a seating capacity of 1000, was filled, the crowd stormed the doors in an effort to gain admittance, and it was only by using force that the police were able to restrain it. So great was the disturbance and the cries that, for a few moments, the service was interrupted.

The great majority were women, and the crush became so great just before 2 o'clock that two women fainted and had to be removed in private automobiles.

Every window in an adjoining house was packed; boys were perched on lamp posts, and across the street both men and boys were using trees and trolley posts to gain points of vantage.

Never before in the history of Los Angeles has there been such a crowd at the funeral of a private citizen. The mounted officers kept open a path for street cars with difficulty and vehicular traffic was stopped by Sergt. McCaleb at 1 o'clock.

They remained outside the house of worship, standing for three hours waiting to catch a glimpse of the casket and to see men and women whose names are known all around the world.

All Screenland's notables sent floral pieces. The entire front of the chancel was a solid mass of blossoms which overflowed, almost to the altar in one direction, and down to the foot of the bier in another.

Standing out prominently in bold relief against all the rest, was a huge, magnificent wreath of roses sent by Mabel Normand, which was on the left and a snow white cross of lilies with a card bearing the simple inscription: "From Dustin."

There also was a modest shower of lilies, the flowers of purity, somewhat inconspicuous among the riot of American Beauties, orchids and other expensive blossoms. This card said merely: "Ethel Daisy's" and was the contribution of Ethel Daisy Tanner, 19-year-old daughter of the dead man, whose home is in New York.

While a list of the names on the cards attached to the floral pieces read like a page from the blue book of Filmdom, there was one, written in a rather scrawly hand, indicating it came from one in the humbler ranks, reading, simply: "For Mr. Taylor--from Jim." It was a basket of delicate Spring flowers.

The Black Prince roses which Mary Miles Minter left at the mortuary, were there, as well as a gorgeous piece from the Directors' Association, of which the dead man was the president, and scores of others.

Included in the number were flowers and pieces from the American Society of Cinematographers, a harp of pink roses, sweet peas and lilies, Charles Ray; shower of roses and lilies, from George Young and Helen Sanborn; Al Christie, red roses; Lila Lee, shower of pink roses; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Ince, cross of pink roses and orchids; W. A. Robertson, shower of pink roses;

Mack Sennett, basket of roses; E. M. and F. A. Franklin, showers of lilies; Antonio Moreno, wreath of lilies and orchids; Harry Fellows, assistant to Mr. Taylor, spring blossoms, sweet peas and lilies; Constance Talmadge, American Beauty roses, L. L. Burns, wreath of sweet peas, Charles Chaplin, wreath of velvet roses; Mr. and Mrs. Douglas MacLean, spray of roses and lilies; from "Bebe and Phyllis" a spray of pink carnations and lilies; Charles Levy and Sons, red velvet roses and lilies of the valley, Mr. and Mrs. R. Barker, wreath of pink roses and lilies of the valley; Edward Knoblock, wreath of sweet peas and lilies; shower of roses, Mrs. Otis Turner of New Rochelle, New York; Elsie A. Larson, roses; Ethel M. Davis, wreath, as well as large pieces from every organization identified with the film industry, including the Screen Writers' Guild, Actors' Equity Association and others.

It was shortly after noon when the casket was placed at the head of the main aisle of the cathedral by Ivy H. Overholtzer, head of the mortuary from which bears his name.

A deaconess in her semi-uniform of gray, was busy arranging the late floral tributes. A minister was tiptoeing about whispering and arranging final details. The air was heavy with the scent of roses, lilies and other flowers.

Outside the February sun was shining brightly, with a hint of Spring in the air. A stray beam found its way through a bit of stained glass in a chancel window, which, strangely enough, bathed the bier in a mist of shimmering gold.

The British flag, draped over the casket, was transmuted into a cloth of wondrous color and beauty. It was a scene of peace and quiet, yet pregnant with events soon to occur.

Then came soft footfalls on the carpeted aisle and into a pew but a few feet away from the casket came Henry Peavey, colored cook and valet of the dead man, accompanied by J. J. Larkin, a white friend of many years standing.

Peavey took one look at the masses of flowers, one glance at the gleaming cross on the altar, then his eye was caught and held by the flag-draped coffin, enwrapped in golden light.

Suddenly he sobbed aloud, and, half turning his body, crumpled into a heap on the cushions, his body shaken with grief. It was almost half an hour before he could compose himself, and during the services tears ran unrestrained down his cheeks.

Then came a sharp reminder of the days when the director abandoned the studio to battle for right, truth and justice, and became one of the five million men who helped turn the tide of war and bring victory. For Mr. Taylor enlisted as a private in the British army and rose to the rank of captain with remarkable rapidity.

As a mute reminder of that service, his cap lay on the coffin, and he lay there in the casket in his uniform, but without the medals he won for valor and bravery.

There was a sharp tread of feet, the rattle of arms, and short, sharp commands as a guard of honor was posted by the captain in command--Canadian soldiers, former service men, in full uniform, one at each corner, standing immobile, statue-like, with heads bowed, their hands resting on the butts of their rifles with barrels resting on the floor.

And between the staccato orders of the captain came the sound of the sobs of Peavey, the servant of the dead man.

It was half an hour before the time set for the rites that the half of the cathedral set aside for the film folks began to fill.

Charles Eyton, general manager of the West Coast studios of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, was among the first to come. He was followed by a number of directors almost as well known as their dead friend who lay in the casket in the front of the church, with four soldiers on guard--the honor guard for the dead British captain.

Among the others who were present were George Melford, Ted Sloman, Wesley Ruggles, Frank Beall, Ben Wilson, Murdock MacQuarrie, James Young, Frank Campeau, Theodore Roberts, Antonio Moreno, Gilbert Hamilton, George L. Cox, Wallie Van, Paul Scardon, Roy Clements, Mrs. Julia Crawford Ivers, Mr. and Mrs. Henry McRae, Wallace Worsley, Kathleen Kirkham, Frank Lloyd, Joseph DeGrasse, Arthur Hoyt, Constance Talmadge, who was accompanied by her mother;

James Neill and scores of others whose names are household words over the world.

Among the throng was a little dark-haired, big-eyed girl whose eyes bore traces of weeping. She came in quietly with her mother and found as unobtrusive a seat as possible.

She is Neva Gerber, former fiancée of Mr. Taylor, and, at the time of his death, one of his warmest friends and ardent admirers. Her handkerchief went often to her face during the services, as she was swept by memories of the tragedies, in sharp contrast to the happy hours they had spent planning a future wherein they should always be together.

Outside the crowd had increased to large proportions. Sergeant McCaleb sent in a call for additional police to handle the impatient throng. A few of the fortunate ones who stood closest to the church door were admitted and it was announced the cathedral was closed.

Then it was that the crowd broke the restraining ropes and the human barriers of soldiers and police and swept up the steps, determined to gain admission.

There was a quick mobilizing of uniformed officers, attaches of the church and others who blocked the onslaught. They were compelled to handle some of the foremost and most aggressive men and women with force to prevent them from taking the edifice by storm. Some were people who had worked with Mr. Taylor; others came from various studios, but in the main they were idle curiosity seekers who possessed a morbid desire to be present at the services and to view the body later.

They had waited from two to three hours and they were determined to get in at all costs. While the church was not completely full, this wholesale onslaught made it impossible to open the door and admit the few for whom there still was standing room.

The organ began a slow, solemn dirge, as the crowd without was clamoring for admittance, and making so much noise those in the back could scarcely hear its notes.

Dean William MacCormack, standing high in the pulpit, a dignified,

commanding figure, was the center of attention. He gave a signal, and the male quartet ruffled its music, the organ switched into a prelude and then they sang the old, beloved hymn, which took many back to their childhood, and away for the moment, of the scenes of which they were apart.

"Lead, kindly light, amidst the encircling gloom.

"The night is dark and I am far from home.

"Lead Thou me on."

Their voices rose, clear and melodious and the swelling notes of the organ rose in accompaniment. To some this was but a prelude, but to most it brought recollections of days that are gone and friends who are no more.

Of other churches, perhaps, at eventide, and other voices which sang this hymn--voices, like that of William Desmond Taylor, there in the casket, now stilled in death.

When the last note died away, Dean MacCormack began reading the beautiful and impressive service of the Episcopal Church for the burial of the dead--the comforting words from the Book of books, which have come down through the years to lighten the sorrows of the bereaved, rich in promise and vibrant with hope.

The clergyman made an impressive picture as he stood in the chancel in his vestments of white, reading the promises of the Man of Galilee, made 1900 years ago, which have brought their mede of cheer to countless millions:

"I am the resurrection and the Life; whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

And those other pledges of eternal life and happiness.

Then it seemed most fitting and proper that the quartet should sing another dearly beloved hymn, another heritage of the ages, "Abide With Me"--

"Abide with me.

"Fast falls the even tide.

"The darkness deepens.

"Lord with me abide."

Then there was the reading of Scripture by the Rev. C. H. Boddington, assistant to the dean, and the final prayer.

Then the thousand persons in the church rose to their feet, again there was the sharp military commands as the guard of honor was changed, and, preceded by Dean MacCormack the casket was carried up the aisle and deposited in the vestibule of the cathedral.

The throng within the church filed slowly out, stopping to take a last look at the slain director.

And as they went slowly by Mabel Normand, in church pew, was in a state of collapse, but regained her composure later. She had planned to leave the edifice by a little used door, but abandoned the plan.

The pall bearers, honorary and actual, were made up of members of the Motion Picture Directors' Association and those of the British Overseas Club, service men in uniform.

Those from the directors' organization included James Young, Frank Beall, Frank Lloyd, D. M. Hartford, Joseph DeGrasse, Arthur Hoyt and Charles Eyton. The overseas contingent, which included the firing squad, was made up, in part, of the following: Major W. Driver, in command; Captains Morrie Spencer and J. Portus and Lieutenants Carter, Thompson, Donsell, Southern, Dalton, Jackson, Dickson and Rawlins. The firing squad was under command of Captain Arthur Clayton.

A picturesque touch of color was lent to the otherwise drab scene by the presence of a company of Scotch bagpipers in full regalia, from caps to kilts and short stockings. There also was present, wearing a uniform unlike any of the rest, a bugler, furnished by the commander of the British warship Calcutta, now anchored at the port of Los Angeles.

When the last of the spectators had left the cathedral, but with the outside crowd still increasing in numbers, the casket was born to the waiting hearse. There was a craning of necks and then the crowd surged forward completely blocking the passage way the police had made for the hearse and the funeral party.

It was with difficulty that the bluecoats remade the path through the dense throng but it was finally accomplished and the funeral cortege started on its way.

It moved slowly south on Olive street, the guard of honor, with arms reversed, followed by the pipers, playing a funeral march, the muffled drum forming a tonal background for the somewhat shrill skirling of the pipes.

Traffic was halted on every cross street as the procession passed.

On each side of the hearse walked the pallbearers, then came members of the Overseas Club in uniform, followed by the automobiles. In the first machine was Charles Eyton, William de Mille and a number of Lasky studio celebrities. A limousine immediately following was occupied by Mabel Normand. The shades were closely drawn and the one star whose name has been more frequently mentioned in connection with the murder of Taylor was, with her party, hidden from the curious gaze of the thousands through which it passed.

The next machine contained members of the Motion Picture Directors' Association, and the other noted members of the film colony.

As the thin, high notes of the bagpipes called attention to the procession, pedestrians stopped and doffed their hats and gazed. Solid lines of humanity in the center of the street down to Ninth street, did not obstruct their vision. Men at work on a building on Olive street between Seventh and Eighth stopped their work and stood on ladders and the roof, hats off, and watched the passing of the machines.

Newsboys stopped selling their papers, with stories of the tragedy, to worm their way up to the front line of spectators in the street.

Just as the cortege was between Seventh and Eighth streets, Henry Peavey ran across the street and climbed into an open car.

Along the entire route the sidewalks were lined with people who paused and watched the solemn march.

For nearly a mile on each side of Hollywood cemetery, where the final ceremonies were held, machines were parked. Along the drives of the cemetery hundreds of others were left, while their owners went to make up part of a throng of more than 1000 people.

A square was roped off and around it this new crowd was waiting when the cortege arrived.

The magnificent floral pieces had been set up and formed a fitting

background for the last rites. And most prominent among them was the huge wreath sent by Mabel Normand.

Also occupying an important position was the director's table at which he worked, and the canvas-backed chair in which he worked.

The guard of honor drew up on one side.

And then, there under the blue sky, with the green grass under foot, and palms waving gently in the afternoon breeze, the final words were said for the man who loved the open places of the world more than anything on earth.

It seemed especially fitting and proper that the last tributes should be paid outdoors before his body was placed in a mausoleum.

There was a prayer by the Dean, and then the Canadians took charge and the dead director was given a strictly military funeral.

The spectators were permitted to view the body, after which three volleys were fired by the squad, and between each volley, the bagpipes sent forth their mournful refrain.

Then the bugler placed his instrument to his lips and sounded "taps," the last call of the military day.

The notes sounded through the lisnet city of the dead as the hundreds stood in hushed silence, and the last mark of respect and love had been paid the dead director.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/> or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 67 -- July 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROROLOGY?

TAYLOROROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

A dealer of autographed photos is advertising a photo of Taylor which was autographed to Minter at <http://www.pioneer.net/~jonelen/WilliamDTaylor.html>

And regarding autographed photos, if you are seeking an autographed photo of Mary Miles Minter, you should be aware that most early autographed photos do not contain her true signature. In an interview, she stated that her mother had always signed her autographs. Samples of the common fake autograph and the real autograph can be seen on the Silent Ladies web site. The typical

fake is at <http://www.uno.edu/~drcom/Silent/MMM16.jpg> and the real signature is at <http://www.uno.edu/~drcom/Silent/MMM18.jpg> The real signature can also be seen on a photo at <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/MMMPhoto.pdf>

Louella Parsons Interviews with Directors

Between 1918 and 1923, Louella Parsons conducted the following interviews with silent film directors who were contemporaries of William Desmond Taylor.

* * * * *

J. Stuart Blackton

May 9, 1920

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Twenty-three years ago James Stuart Blackton was an artist on the Evening World. Some weeks his name was in the salary pot and other weeks he did not fare so well. It all depended how his creative mind was working and whether or not an elusive idea proved practical enough to be transferred to paper and sold. These little stories illustrated by young Blackton were called gold bricks, but it wasn't until later years that the commodore was able to see any joke in the name.

While he was digging for material the new machine invented by Thomas Edison came to his attention. He picked up his drawing board, his crayon and his new gloves and sallied forth to meet the inventor. He was told politely but firmly by a pompous individual in charge of Mr. Edison's engagements he must not limit his stay beyond five minutes.

"That is enough for any story," said the secretary, scornfully, eyeing the drawing board.

But Thomas Edison had something to say about his engagements and he kept

the artist there for two hours. He even volunteered to give an imitation of his own skill with the crayon and drew a square pig with a curly tail for the edification of his guest. The drawing Mr. Blackton says is probably as bad as anything in the world. He still has it among his treasures, also the sketch he did of Mr. Edison that Summer day twenty-three years ago.

The inventive mind of Thomas Edison asserted itself that very afternoon. Like many folk he had a profound admiration for a talent he did not possess. Mr. Edison was fascinated with the sketches. He asked the young man if he could draw pictures life size, large enough to be photographed, and Mr. Blackton, who at this time in his life would have agreed to reproduce a correct imitation of a Botticelli painting, said he certainly could. Mr. Edison, Mr. Blackton now thinks, must have been a gullible soul--he told him to be there the following afternoon. He was there and only three hours in advance of his appointment.

"The Edison studio in those days," said Mr. Blackton, "was on wheels. Science at that time figured direct sunlight was essential in getting photographic results! The moving machine followed the sun--and it was one's man's job to keep track of the erratic movements of Old Sol."

The gold brick days of young Blackton were destined to be short. He fell in with Albert E. Smith about this time and together the two youths contracted with Thomas Edison for one of his first machines. He had taken a fancy to the artist chap, and when six months later the machines were ready for the market young Smith and Blackton were the first to have their order filled.

The days following the association with W. E. Rock, known affectionately as Pop Rock, form one of the most illuminating passages of screen history in the world. Its all been told again and again. It has all been used as the foundation for motion picture history by historians in search of material describing the juvenile industry. But oft told as it has been, both Commodore Blackton and A. E. Smith have expressed a hope that some day they may get time to put down the real romance in a book.

What a book these two men could write. J. Stuart Blackton has started

as many stars on the road to screen fame as David Belasco has stage favorites. The Vitagraph Company became a sort of legitimate screen-training school for girls. Hundreds of pretty school girls called there for engagements, and the commodore, who has a sixth sense for divining screen faces, used to select these applicants. There are names today rated among the famous screen stars of the world whose first peep at a studio was Vitagraph and whose first introduction to the camera was made by Commodore Blackton.

"Anita Stewart came out to the studio and was put in a historical pageant," said Mr. Blackton. "One days the girls passed me on their way to the dressing rooms, and as I stood upon a raised dais with the cameraman I noticed a beautiful girl with a sensitive, shy face and I called her to me and asked her name.

"'Anita Stewart,' she replied timidly, apparently frightened at my voice. 'Would you like to act in pictures?' I asked her. 'Oh, yes, indeed,' and her face lighted up with an animation I knew could be reserved for the screen. I made an appointment with her to come to the studio the next afternoon at 2 o'clock. I engaged her at \$25 a week, and she was speechless with joy. I did not know for two weeks after I had engaged her she was Ralph Ince's sister-in-law.

This is supposed to be an interview and not a chronological list of Vitagraph happenings. But the old Vitagraph days are so rich in film history and film adventure one feels the half has not been told. It was while Sidney Drew made his first Vitagraph picture he wooed and won his wife.

"Mrs. Drew used the nom de plume in those days of Jane Morrow," said Mr. Blackton. "I introduced her to Sidney, who was working for us, and she went to Florida as a member of his company. The trip did the rest--they came home engaged.

"Sidney Drew," went on Mr. Blackton, "wanted to make serious pictures. We knew his forte lay in comics, but I decided after talking with him to let him have full reign in the matter. He made a serious play called 'Conscience.' He played an old miser, and while the picture had its strong

points it could not be compared with his comedy work, which later he was sensible enough to see was his particular niche in the film world."

Commodore Blackton--the commodore is derived from his association with the Atlantic Yacht Club. He was commodore for many years, during which time he entertained Sir Thomas Lipton and hundreds of other celebrities. Commodore Blackton, although still a stockholder in Vitagraph and director, makes his own pictures independent of Vitagraph.

"Mr. Smith and I, contrary to general opinion, are the best friends in the world," he said. "We do not always agree on policy, but we have been close friends too many years to let business interfere in our personal relationship.

"Mr. Smith," admitted Commodore Blackton, "is a far better business man than I am. I like to make pictures, but when it comes to dollars and cents I have to confess to a loathing for the commercial side. Even now I have a manager who looks after that end.

"I never talk business to the people I engage. All contracts are made through my business office. I feel I can direct my players artistically with much better results if we let the commercial side remain separate and distinct."

After twenty-three years of devotion to the screen James Stuart Blackton might be said to know pictures. He knows their virtues, their faults, their tricks and their many ways of deceiving the public.

"Take a story," said Mr. Blackton, "that by every reason in the world should make a beautiful and artistic picture. The producer puts his heart and soul into its production. He brings out all the beauty of the story, emphasizes its strong points and tones down its weak places--and then when it comes out to have the public believe it lacks the essential punch.

"That happened to me last year," said Mr. Blackton. I followed that story with a crook play of melodramatic type with enough action to start a train in motion. The picture after it was finished was a disappointment. It lacked artistic merit. But the public likes it. Where I had sold one print of my first picture I sold twenty of my last one.

"What do you think a condition like that signifies?" asked Commodore Blackton, earnestly.

"That the public wants to be entertained, not uplifted, and that it is generally wise to give the public what it asks."

"My intentions in that direction," answered Mr. Blackton, "can be answered in three words: Please the public."

But a man who has labored to get, like Commodore Blackton, the best in pictures may believe in his heart he is going to seek the path of the least resistance in films, but unconsciously he is constantly trying to make his pictures within the understanding of the mass mind and at the same time artistic. He has recently invented a photographic appliance he calls painting the lens. It gives the film the appearance of having been really painted and does away with some of the crude black and white in the print that is sometimes too sharp to be entirely satisfying to the eye.

Although one of the oldest men in point of screen service Commodore Blackton is still a comparatively young man in years. He was only 19 when he tried to find ideas for the Evening World. That was twenty-three years ago. Figure it out for yourself. He has, in addition to his success in the picture world, a beautiful home in Brooklyn, a charming wife, a talented son and daughter. What more can man ask? The average man might feel he had made the most out of life, but Commodore Blackton will never think so until he has satisfied himself with his own picture-making.

In summing up his motion picture career one might feel if at any time the commodore decided to rest on his laurels he could give a very excellent account of what he has done to promote pictures. We hope, of course, he will not want to resign. He is still a necessary factor in our cinema progress, but in speaking of what he has done we might mention "The Battle Cry of Peace," the first picture on preparedness, and later effectively used as propaganda. His taking over with Albert E. Smith the Criterion as a motion picture theatre in 1913. This, so far as any one knows, was the first time motion pictures were put on with a stage presentation. The Vitagraph pictures were shown at this theatre and they were supplemented with acts in

which Vitagraph starts participated. The Criterion Theatre in 1913 furnished the foundation for the picture theatres to come, like the Strand, Rivoli, Rialto and Capitol.

That deed in itself entitles Commodore Blackton and Albert Smith to eternal recognition. What would our lives be without these theatres now?-- a place where pictures can be seen in appropriate settings.

* * * * *

Herbert Brenon

October 6, 1918

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Herbert Brenon sends the following chatty, entertaining letter from London. It was not send for publication, but there is so much of interest, we are risking Mr. Brenon's displeasure and passing it along to the many people who will be glad to hear first-hand of his picture making efforts for the British Government:

Grosvenor Hotel, Chester

12th September, 1918.

Miss Louella Parsons,

Care of Morning Telegraph.

My dear Miss Parsons--This is the first letter about my picture to any one outside of my family. I shall write to you as a friend.

I came here very quietly, as you know, quite unheralded. One does not wish to advertise the fact that one is doing national work. While I consider it the crowning honor of my career that I should have been invited over here to do this work I also realize the very great sense of responsibility; there were many messages from this war to the world, and if I could but bring home one of these to the masses I would have done a little bit, so I came. On the boat I imagined that the whole army and navy, indeed, the entire civic population would assist me. I had not been here one week before I realized

that I was the one that had to fight. I began by seeing the fourth assistant secretary to the secretary of the first assistant of the chief secretary of the Director of the Cinematograph Division to the Ministry of Information. I was quite a stranger, the high officials of the government were beginning to realize the importance of the motion picture camera as a great demonstrator of propaganda, but the under officials scorned it.

I gave up officialdom for a while and spent a few days with Sir Hall Caine. There is a man who does things. We went over the story together; we made up our minds we would see it through no matter what happened, and we went ahead.

At first all the actors volunteered, and then one by one they dropped out. I had to make a beginning, so I began with the sub-plot, and with minor actors. I was waiting for the leading man and the leading lady and also the heavy man, with names. There was one leading woman above all others that I wanted. Her name was Miss Marie Lohr, the youngest and most charming woman star in England (like our sweet Elsie Ferguson). She had refused motion picture offer after motion picture offer. At first she was adamant, and then she melted. "I am putting on a new play," she said. "If it is a success I will play the lead for you." It was a failure, she had to put on a new play; there was one hope gone, so thinks I to myself, thinks I, "This sub-plot is getting too important, I must start on the main plot. I must hie me for leading man." Matheson Lang was the most popular leading man in England. "Certainly," says he, "if my play is a success, not just now. I am off to Brighton to put on the 'Purple Mask' next Monday." On Sunday night I prayed in every different language I knew. On Tuesday morning I got a telegram. "Play a success, will need six weeks to whip it into shape; will then be glad to play for you."

I was wearing the sub-plot threadbare, so I started on some of my spectacular scenes.

Dear old Ellen Terry, bless her heart, came along and did a little sequence for me. I shall never forget those few days as long as I live. What charm, what everlasting youth, what talent, what beauty, what an angel!

She bucked me up a whole lot, and the mere fact that she had done her bit encouraged the others.

It was drawing near to Mr. Lang's London opening. It was drawing near the time for Miss Lohr's opening. I had finished nearly all the scenes except those that they were in, when, one day, I come home from my exteriors and find a note to me from my secretary. "Factory burned up at 2 o'clock today," it said, "every foot of your negative is burnt." I do not think I shall ever forget those next few moments. I wanted to give up. I wanted to come home to America, I wanted my family, I wanted my friends; I felt my loneliness terribly; I felt weak for a second or two; I lacked courage, but only a second or two. A few comforting telephone messages came in: one from Miss Marie Lohr, who said, "Whether my play is a success or not, Mr. Brenon, I shall play that part for you." In another five minutes I decided to do it all over again, and the next morning, with a pretty heavy heart, but with as cheerful a face as I could dig up, I went to the studio, and, bless their hearts, my staff all set to with me again and in an hour we were in full swing again. That week Miss Lohr opened in London in "Nurse Benson" and Mr. Lang in "The Purple Mask," and both were great successes; in a few days they were both down at the studio, and although not paid one penny, they gave their hearts and souls to their work.

The cast was now practically complete, with a lot of big names. I have never had so fine a company in my life. I do not think I ever shall again. Sir Hall Caine had given me the finest foundation for a plot I have ever had (not excepting "War Brides").

The great difficulty has always been in making the times when the various stars could act fit in with each other, all having different matinees. Sometimes a star could only come for one hour, while another star could give six hours, but all their scenes were together, so we had to adjust circumstances to them.

It was weeks before the War Office or the Admiralty would give us facilities, but when the officials began to see some of the dramatic scenes, they melted and soon all sorts of doors were opened.

The plot calls for the German occupation of entire city. Not a village, mind you, but a city; imagine if you can, a city, say as large as Albany, overrun by the German army. I shall never forget the first day the German army marched into the city! I had the cooperation, of course, of the military and civil officials; in fact, I had with me in the car the Mayor, the chief of police, and the general commanding the Western Home Forces; a small army of military and civil police were also with me. We took possession about 10 o'clock without a word of warning or without any notification to the newspapers. Can you imagine the people's amazement! One headquarters officer, mind you, went to the chief of police and said that it was an outrage for German prisoners to be allowed to march through Chester under arms, even if it was for the cinema. Although he belonged to headquarters they had kept the secret so well that even he thought it was a private enterprise, and not official. In one street we passed a few hundred German prisoners on their way to work, and when they heard the band playing a German tune, and the German army marching through the entire town, their faces lit up with joy, they actually saluted the passing officers. They quite thought they had won, for it was during that terrific advance when the Germans got so close to Amiens. Their joy was very short lived, however; they soon found out it was play acting.

We halted our German army once near the castle, when a woman shook her fist at a group of our German soldiers standing at ease, and cried out, "Curse you, you brutes, you killed two of my boys." I shall never forget her. I soon explained it, and her face in a moment was wreathed in smiles. She knew I was trying to bring home a message.

Of course, you heard about the drowning incident. That was really dreadful. A young girl, Renee Mayer, a very popular actress over here, had to jump off a 45-foot bridge, a suicide, and her sweetheart is supposed to jump after to try and save her. She hit the water very hard, falling on her face, which was slightly cut. For the moment she was quite stunned. I was standing off on the bank watching the scene, but as I had told her not to come up for a long while, giving her rescuer time to jump in after her before

she came up, I was not worried. She stayed under for a long while, then came up and threw her hands around the man's neck. Not until they went down for the fourth time did I realize that there was something wrong. I screamed to the boats to pick them up, but they could not hear me, in fact, they thought it was all part of the scene, and it was only after I dived in that all the boats moved forward and picked all three of us out of the water a little the worse for wear. Miss Mayer had lost her head and put her arms around the actor's neck and her legs around his body, gripping him like death, so that he could not move. The reason she had stayed under so long was that she had caught her legs in the weeds, which abound at the bottom of the English rivers. It was very nearly a tragedy, and it was some days before the actor recovered. Miss Mayer and I were soon all right.

The picture is nearing the finish now, and it will only be a few weeks before it is completed. In fact it will be in the market over here in England early in December, and it should reach the American market about Christmas.

I may be going to France next week with Roy Hunt, my photographer, to get some scenes of the British advance. I shall not be over there very long, but hope to get some interesting scenes.

I hope this is not too long a letter. I shall look forward to seeing you again. I am awfully glad you are with The Morning Telegraph. With kindest regards

I am, very cordially yours.

Herbert Brenon

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William De Mille

March 12, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

If William De Mille has his way the villains of the screen will soon be

as dead as yesterday's newspaper. He has personally eliminated all the Desperate Desmonds of the screen for the past three years because he thinks the wily, wicked scoundrel who formerly laid low all the virtue that came his way is a menace to our film literature.

Mr. De Mille did not express himself in exactly those preachy words. He is not given to extensive moralizing. What he really said was:

"I never have a villain in my picture. Any man who would do the vicious things attributed to him in some of our earlier films would be a moron, and it is unpleasant to describe such a character. Most wickedness springs from a diseased mind, and I do not believe disease should ever be featured. People are not usually given to extreme viciousness unless they are sick. People who are perfectly sane do not commit these continual crimes against society for the pure pleasure of being evil."

William De Mille, who has been described again and again as one of our most spiritual directors, makes four pictures a year, spending three months on each one of his creative efforts.

"I do not attribute any success that I may have with my pictures as a personal triumph," he said. "I know without my staff I could not get results. We have our little company, and every member feels it is his picture. They are as upset over any mistake I may make as I am myself. They watch every move, and if I do something they feel is detrimental to the final results they never hesitate to tell me."

In this little group mentioned in the William De Mille closed corporation is included not only the scenario writer, but the cutter, the cameraman and all the technicians who have any part, however small, in making the production.

The De Mille brothers are curiously unlike in their method of presenting the photo-drama. Cecil specializes on the spectacular and emphasizes it to the nth degree at every opportunity. He is the Robert Chambers of the screen and furnishes a best seller every time he makes a picture. William De Mille makes the spectacular only incidental, and seldom thinks it necessary in his type of film drama. He is more of a dreamer and a poet, unconsciously

seeking the more subtle problems of life as material for his photo-dramas. He would probably resent being thought a propagandist, and yet he borders very close on the edge in his interpretations.

Take "Miss Lulu Bett." Was anything ever a deeper psychological study of a homely girl, with plenty of propaganda served deftly, it is true, but none the less effectively in her behalf? One feels William De Mille has never reached his greatest height. That one day he will make a picture that will stand alone as an example of the highest type of screen art. He sighed wearily when I suggested this.

"But I put my best in every picture I make now," he said.

A needless remark. One has only to see a William De Mille picture to recognize the truth of this simple statement.

"The masterpiece will be inspirational," was the answer made to his objection.

"Bought and Paid For," Mr. De Mille's latest offering to the Paramount cause, is being shown today at the Rivoli. Some one who saw it in the projection room spoke of the delicacy with which he handled some of the scenes that might have been suggestive at the hands of a less skilled director. Mr. De Mille came East purposely to bring the print of the Broadhurst play and discuss the scenario of "Nice People" with Clara Beranger, his scenario writer.

"I discuss the story with Miss Beranger, then she makes a rough draft and we discuss it again," said Mr. De Mille. "I am able to follow her script scene for scene when I make my picture. With a less capable writer I could not do this. While I am finishing our picture Miss Beranger is getting the scenario ready for my next one."

The De Milles returned home last Wednesday after burning the midnight oil in an equal distribution of pleasure and business. Mrs. De Mille, who is as charming as her husband and as big a social asset, was the daughter of Henry George. So naturally she is well equipped to talk on the subject of single tax. Mr. De Mille is equally conversant with the subject. He says not that he was converted by his wife, but because his father was an advocate

of Henry George, so it is a matter of heritage with them both.

"Nice People" in the hands of a director like William De Mille should fare well. It is in a way a preachment, although on a subject the world will find timely now. The universal flapper and the danger of turning her loose without restriction in circles where money is a menace is all taken up by Rachel Crothers. The stage play fell down after the first two acts and became a little obvious in its effort to drive home its message. This undoubtedly will be obviated in the picture by Mr. De Mille, who sees great possibilities in the story. The screen frequently, despite all that has been said of its painful license with plays and books, takes a mediocre play and elevates it to a position it would never attain in its original form.

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Abel Gance

August 14, 1921

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Not even in the good old pre-war days when Germany was looked upon as a possible business and social companion, were there so many foreign film producers as we have had with us this Summer. Every boat brings an influx of foreign competitors, all of them prepared to exploit their motion pictures. After meeting most of them and classifying them as to their place in this great cinema world, we are forced to admit Abel Gance brings an agreeable personality not often found in this drab workaday hemisphere, where the pursuit of gold so often robs a man of his native charm.

Of course Mr. Gance comes to us from Paris with the halo of a playwright and poet. He is not essentially a motion picture producer, combining rather his film perquisites with his reputation as one of France's rising young dramatists. In the course of four months he has succeeded in establishing himself in New York in a manner that most foreigners would consider a feat in

four years. But that is due to the Gance personality--which is a tangible thing--a force no one can gainsay after meeting the maker of "J'Accuse."

It was in fact "J'Accuse" that first brought Abel Gance to America. That he came for three weeks and remained four months speaks well of our country. His purpose originally was to place "J'Accuse" on the market. This he succeeded in accomplishing by virtue of a contract with United Artists. Still he lingers, impelled this time by a desire to see a Broadway presentation of his picture, when it opens at the Strand later this month.

After seeing "J'Accuse" and Mr. Gance's treatment of the war, a subject that has perhaps suffered from clumsy interpretation more than any event in recent years, one instinctively knows there is something in this young French producer that is not ordinary. He thinks in a plane not usual in our best motion picture circles, and he understands the spiritual power of the cinema. His idea is to portray on the screen what the eye cannot see--to put it more simply, to give people something to think about and not to have their mental labors performed for them.

These things he told me over the luncheon table with the aid of his efficient secretary, Pierre. At times lapsing into his own French tongue he told something of his early life in Paris. His love of literature was born with him, and at the age most boys were devouring their "Nick Carter" dime novels he was reading Shakespeare, Goethe, Corneille and Hugo. Some times he dipped into Ibsen and Tolstoi, broadening out his literary foundation day by day until he acquired a speaking acquaintance with all these famous writers.

A familiarity with these authors one would not think would inspire a youth to leave home, still about this time young Gance ran away to Brussels. He hadn't any money and he had to eat. A chance to become an actor was offered him and he accepted it, not because it appealed to him but because gentlemen as well as ladies must live. This little flier before the footlights gave him an opportunity to keep in touch with the drama. As it turned out later it became an excellent preparatory school for what was to follow.

The young Frenchman about this time changed his mode of mental attack

and feasted on the philosophers, choosing Nietzsche, Confucius, Schopenhauer and others of this school for his daily diet. And Mr. Gance hasn't forgotten his philosophers; he talks about them quite as intelligently as he does about motion pictures, uniting the two in an amazing fashion, although we do not usually think of Schopenhauer and motion pictures as having any relative association.

About this time motion pictures appeared on the horizon and he accepted a job to write scenarios. Mr. Gance said when he began to make pictures to the tune of a time clock he found the same difficulties that we have here--a demand that all screen stories have a happy ending regardless of logic. His only hope was that one day he would have a chance to produce a film without all these obstacles, and finally one day along came Louis Nalpas, at that time manager of the Film d'Art, France's most important film company, with the very chance he wanted.

At the end of three days Mr. Gance was ready to produce "Mater Dolorosa" from his own scenario. That it is one of the most successful films ever made in Europe and shows the young man was born with a dramatic instinct that needed only a little cultivation to encourage, a little experience to bring out his latent talent as a producer.

Of course, he has followed "Mater Dolorosa" with other productions, and while making pictures as he believes they should be made he has taken time to write two stage plays. One is a mystery play, "La Dame du Lac," a drama of the Middle Ages. The other "La Victoire de Somothrace," a tragedy, in five acts will be produced at the Comedie Francais. To the Frenchman having a play produced at the Comedie Francais is like an American having an opera accepted at the Metropolitan Opera House--it has the same significance.

A contest held by the Comedia, a Paris newspaper, shows how Mr. Gance stands in his own home town. The purpose of this contest was to determine the most popular pictures in Paris. "The Cheat" received seventy-six votes, Chaplin seventy-two and then came four of Mr. Gance's pictures, "J'Accuse," "The Tenth Symphony," "Mater Dolorosa" and "The Zone of Death," proving it is not a case of one production that induces the admiration of France's output

of Gance pictures.

Although Mr. Gance has received a very cordial invitation to remain in New York and produce his next three--"Ecce Homo," "The End of the World" and "The Kingdom of Earth"--he evades this issue very politely by remarking he loves America but hasn't decided yet whether or not he will make pictures here. He is young, only 30, and yet with a future that impresses his admirers as being one of the pivots that will turn the tread of film art in the proper direction. He is ambitious, he is eager and he is enthusiastic--this with his personality and his ability should make it possible for him to achieve what he desires--a chance to redeem the screen from the banalities of life, to show things as they are, and use some of the terrific power he says he knows the motion picture offers. It has always been his plan to develop social idea--a psychological situation--doing this gives him a field in the broad area of the cinema possibilities almost untouched. After hearing him talk and seeing "J'Accuse" it is no fulsome praise to say he will do those things--he is doing them. He is taking the weak and heretofore undeveloped side of pictures, the spiritual, mental side, and giving them the attention they should have if the new art is to endure.

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D. W. Griffith

November 26, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

What is the matter with the movies will be answered when some theatre owner invents a remedy for the present handicap in the theatre of permitting the public to see the last half of a picture before the first has been unreeled, David Wark Griffith says. He believes conditions in the film world will continue as black as some of our most erudite writers have pictured them in the recent scathing magazine articles, until this crying evil is overcome.

"How long could David Belasco hold his supremacy as the stage's most

artistic producer," asked Mr. Griffith, "if his audiences straggled into his theatres all during the performance, some of them seeing the big dramatic climax before they had seen the events leading up to it. Brilliant as he is, he would be a lamentable failure if the public were permitted to see the surprises in his plays first; if the denouement was presented before the first act was seen, he could not possibly survive.

The greatest dramatic producer in the world of any age could not have any appeal to his public if he had to plan his plays with the idea in the back of his mind that he must work out his plot step by step with the thought it could be seen backward as well as in its logical sequence of acts and scenes.

"Take my picture, 'One Exciting Night.' It is full of unexpected moments. The audience is not supposed to know who murdered Johnson. The name of the arch villain who is constantly killing some one is not known. If the patrons of a theatre walk into the house and see the whole plot exposed with the murderer brought to justice and the reason for all this wild excitement, what is there left for him when the first scenes go on again? The picture is ruined. You could not expect any one to find an evening's entertainment in a mystery play with the mystery explained in advance."

Mr. Griffith feels so keenly on the evil of continuous performances he believes it is as grave a problem as censorship.

"I talked with Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks on the harm that has been wrought by this backward presentation," said Mr. Griffith. Mary talked for half an hour and agreed with me something should be done.

"If any theatre owner," said Mr. Griffith, "blazed the trail and announced he would show his features only at certain hours, he would probably lose money. His fellow exhibitors would laugh at him for his visionary plan, but he would be doing a big thing for the artistic future of motion pictures. A plan might be devised on Broadway," went on Mr. Griffith, "whereby no one would be seated after the feature had been on half an hour. If any one arrived that late he would have to wait until the end of the photo-play. There are comfortable divans and commodious lobbies to take care of the late

arriving patrons, but I am not sure this plan would be practical in the smaller towns, where the theatre owner has no way of taking care of his patrons outside of the theatre."

Mr. Griffith feels it is highly essential for some way to be devised for a picture to be seen as the producer intended it when he made it, that he is willing to award a prize to any one who can work out a practical solution of the difficulty and offer some substitute for the haphazard plan that so upset the soul of those who are striving to give the world better pictures.

"One Exciting Night" is not the sole motive for prompting Mr. Griffith to make this plea, but every other production, he says, that has been made with a care and earnestness that gives its producer the right to expect a different presentation.

"We ask ourselves what is the matter with motion pictures. Why do some of our most brilliant minds ridicule the motion picture as cheap and ridiculous? Simply because many producers purposely make their pictures with an obvious theme. They figure if they try any subtlety it will be submerged when the films are run off with the last scenes first and the first scenes last.

"There must be some way to overcome this evil that is holding the motion picture down to a lower level and preventing it from attaining the place it was destined to reach," said Mr. Griffith. "Even the stumbling over pairs of feet in the dark is minor compared with the irreparable harm being done our finest productions by the vogue now existing in the theatres where the films are run off as quickly as the operator can operate the machine in order to seat as many people as possible."

Some one suggested to Mr. Griffith that a system might be evolved whereby the exhibitor would send out to his patrons postcards with the hour the feature would be shown, asking that the patrons try and get to the theatre at the time mentioned on the cards.

"Naturally the theatre owner wants to make as much money as he can," said Mr. Griffith. "No one blames him for that. The postcard might keep people away. He would not want to do anything that would work a hardship

against his business. But I feel there is some brave soul somewhere who for the sake of what it means to motion pictures will try the experiment of not permitting his patrons to take their seats after the feature has been on for half an hour. He would be doing a great good and every producer would rise up and call him blessed."

Mr. Griffith says he will be happy to receive any suggestions either from men who are in the film business or from outsiders. He is confident there is some solution to this evil which threatens to be so disastrous to the finer productions and he asks that every one who is sincerely interested in giving not only New York, but Keokuk, Iowa, or Oshkosh, Wis., the best in motion pictures try and help find the solution.

What is the matter with the movies, as Karl Kitchen and other writers have asked in articles in the various magazines is not a desire on the part of the producers to make cheap films with tawdry subjects, but an inability to get away from these subjects so long as the films are presented backwards.

David Griffith always has something to say when he speaks, and we believe this is worthy of consideration. We should like to hear from some one else on the same subject.

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Ralph Ince

January 29, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

When February rolls around Ralph Ince always goes to the attic of his country place and looks up the Lincoln disguise. He knows it is wise to be prepared, for if there is a Lincoln picture he will be called upon to play the martyred President. I suspect he would be rather hurt if any one else was given that job; it has grown to be sort of a tradition with him. He started it in the old Vitagraph days when "The Battle Cry of the Republic" was being exhibited as an urge for patriotism, and he has continued it now

that he is with Selznick and the subject of Americanization is still a favorite topic.

Every February--that is the last three since Mr. Ince made his famous "Land of Freedom" for the Selznick company, playing his favorite role of Abraham Lincoln, this picture has been brought out for the churches and schools to help celebrate February 12 in fitting style.

"Are you getting your Lincoln picture ready for its annual revival?" I asked Myron Selznick. A question that brought up the subject of Mr. Ince and ended with my promise to go to the Selznick studios and meet the official Lincoln of the screen.

Now a glance at the photograph on this page will prove Mr. Ince does not look like Lincoln in the least. The late President, according to his photographs, was very plain and in no sense an Apollo. Ralph Ince is very good-looking. He has light curly hair, blue eyes and a well-shaped profile.

"You do not look like Lincoln," I said. "Why have you specialized in Lincoln roles?"

"I suppose because I mastered the make-up in the first picture and convinced every one I could look like him," replied Mr. Ince. "It was J. Stuart Blackton who first gave me that part, and it has clung to me ever since, frequently interfering with my directorial duties. Another reason may be my interest in the man. I have read every book available."

Ralph Ince is one of the famous Ince brothers. The other two, Tom and John, having distinguished themselves in the motion picture world as producer and director, making the name Ince trebly valuable in the film world.

"I was the first Ince to go into pictures," said the official Lincoln of the screen. "We were all on the stage. Our parents were of the theatrical world, so it was natural we should follow their calling. I went out to Vitagraph and acted in one-reel stories. I always liked to write, so I spent all my leisure time pounding out scenarios. I wanted to direct, but for a long time there was no opportunity given me."

"I heard," went on Mr. Ince, "that I could make a picture on my own and sell it. One Sunday I went over to New Jersey with a cameraman, collected a

friend who had a car, and with his wife and my wife, produced a 500-foot comedy. I made the picture in a day. Pat Powers saw it and paid me \$300 for my day's work, and I felt like a millionaire. I wrote another story and filmed it on a pleasant Sunday. But this time I wasn't so lucky. I could not sell my picture and I had to pay for the film I used without making a cent."

This, Mr. Ince believed, was the turning point in his career. He knew he had a good story, and if he had proper facilities for producing it he could make a good one-reel picture.

"I had talent in my family," he said. "My wife, Lucile Stewart, could act, and George Stewart, her younger brother, who was just a kid in those days, was very good on the screen. All I needed was the opportunity."

That came when Albert Smith and J. Stuart Blackton turned him loose on a story and he directed it to their satisfaction. From that time on his job as leading man was gone. He was made a bona fide director and was one of the brave souls who experimented with two-reel pictures in the early days. Those Vitagraph dramas of 2,000 feet were the joy of all pioneers. They were the first step forward for better pictures and were hailed as a triumph in the new art.

Mrs. Ince, as Lucile Stewart, played in many of her husband's pictures and became one of the well known screen actresses. About this time Anita Stewart, Mrs. Ince's younger sister, in all her youth and beauty, flashed across the horizon and became a sensation. Almost overnight she was welcomed as another Mary Pickford and within a year she had become internationally famous. Her first work was for Ralph Ince in "The Wood Violet."

But these rattling the skeleton reminiscences have nothing to do with Ralph Ince's Lincoln. Still one cannot delve into his history without mentioning a few of the outstanding facts in his career.

Mr. Ince remained with Vitagraph for some time, later joining the Selznick company. He has been with Selznick for four years and was deep in the throes of "Who Cares," a story by Cosmo Hamilton, when I saw him at the Selznick studios.

"Are you going to do Lincoln this year?" I asked him, as he settled down in a big chair with a Lincolnesque attitude.

"No; I am going to direct. Not even a chance to get out the old make-up is going to interfere with my other duties," he replied, settling the question of love and duty by choosing a capital D.

Mr. Ince says his wife has practically deserted the screen. She is so contented and happy with her home duties at Bayside she prefers the life of domesticity to that of the studio, he said.

Mr. Ince aimed the working side-by-side idea a terrible wallop when he said he was delighted she had decided to remain at the home fireside.

"I come home worn out from work at the studio and I like a change of atmosphere. If Mrs. Ince has been working with me she has been a part of the day's happenings. As it is I go home, find her mind refreshed, and I forget my work. I think that is as it should be. Although we were very happy in our work together."

Mr. Ince says he thinks his brother Tom a great director.

"More than that, he is a great organizer and a fine business man. He is the best business man of the three of us. He seems to combine his talents with a practical side of pictures, a gift few directors possess."

While we were talking the assistant director, the cameraman, the telephone and even the players were trying to coax Mr. Ince down on the floor. After all these efforts I felt I should not interrupt any longer. But Mr. Ince knows so much about the picture world--knowledge gained in his fourteen years in the industry--if one is also a pioneer it is very interesting. He can say he knew the film business "when" and since he has profited by his many experiences one might say he has won the race. Only the directors and players who have been able to weather the storm have survived. Running the risk of being thought of having a Dulcy mind, we must say the survival of the fittest, has been particularly true in the picture business, and Mr. Ince is one of these survivors.

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Rex Ingram

February 13, 1921

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

His name is Rex Ingram. He is the director of the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." That may have meant very little to you in the past, but it is going to be a tremendous force in the artistic creation of motion pictures in the future. In the few hushed moments of appreciation following the unreeling of Ibanez's story, the name Ingram was on every one's lips.

The imagination, the technique, the splendid conception of the four horsemen, the symbolic Christ figure--is not the work of a mere motion picture director--it is the expression of genius.

The scattered groups of motion picture players, directors, producers and writers stood waiting to look at this Rex Ingram who had wrought this marvelous screen play. He did not appear. One after another of our most prominent men and women in the theatrical and picture world passed down the wide steps of the Ritz, but the star of the evening was nowhere in sight.

He had disappeared, as panicky and unwilling to face the crowd, as an author on a first night. I was not only disappointed, I was personally aggrieved. Jack Meador had made an engagement for me to meet Mr. Ingram at that time. I had shown only a polite interest in Mr. Meador's suggestion that I might like to talk with the director of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." I had not seen the picture then.

"Where is he," I demanded.

"He isn't here," said Mr. Meador.

"But you said--"

"Sh! Sh!" whispered M. Meador. "Come with me."

Mr. Meador must have whispered this mysterious sh! sh! to other folk, for presently we found ourselves in the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Geraghty, with Luther Reed, John Emerson, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Hatton, Winifred Westover, Victor Fleming and other kindred spirits.

"Where is he?" I again demanded.

"He isn't here," said Mr. Geraghty.

Just when I had made up my mind to try and forget this elusive young man who never seemed to be where he was expected Jack Meador brought up a slender, boyish looking youth and presented him as Rex Ingram.

Just at first I thought it was a joke. It did not seem possible this boy could have created the marvelous screen story we had just seen.

"Mr. Ingram?" I repeated questioningly?

"Yes," he said, " I came over here to meet you."

That sentence won me.

I expected him to say: "Here I am; what do you want to say to me?"

"But you are so young," I began. "Surely there is some mistake. You did not direct 'The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.'"

"I am not so young as I look," was his quiet answer. "I am 29 years old and I have lived a long time."

"How did you do it?" I asked him, still under the spell of the picture.

"In the beginning June Mathis furnished me with a splendid continuity. She knows more about construction than any writer in the world." For ten minutes he spoke of what a large factor continuity is and how much of the credit belongs to Miss Mathis.

I did not argue that point because the construction of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" is so fine a piece of scenario workmanship it establishes a new era in screen adaptation.

Then he spoke of Rudolph Valentino, the boy whose charm and Latin warmth, contributes so largely to the colorfulness of the picture, and of beautiful Alice Terry--whose Marguerite is gorgeously real and vital. After all of these preliminaries with many promptings and questions on my part he finally told me something of himself.

Rex Ingram was born in Dublin. He lived in the romantic atmosphere of Ireland until he was seventeen when he came to America to seek his fortune. That career he believed lay in becoming a great sculptor. He entered the studio of Lawrie and there attempted to reach his ambition. We were just

going nicely on the young man's ambitions when he suddenly switched the subject and started telling me about Lawrie.

"I owe anything I am to him," said Mr. Ingram. "He is a great genius, a real artist. I only wish I had seen his statue of the Four Horsemen before I made my picture. Saint John, in his Revelations, must have had Lawrie's idea of War, Famine, Pestilence and Death in his mind."

"But your Four Horsemen is undoubtedly one of the high lights," I interrupted. "Your conception is magnificent. The drawings of Albrecht Durer are so horribly real."

"They might have been better," he insisted, "if I had seen the statue first."

Continuing, Mr. Ingram said he had made pictures for two reasons; first, because he needed the money and then because he had always liked photography, and there was something about picturing an idea that appealed to him. Despite his apparent youth he has been directing pictures for seven years. He made "The Black Orchid," one of the first Bluebird pictures for Universal, and managed to escape censorial wrath by an eyelash.

"Stroheim worked for me," he said. "I think he is one of our greatest directors. We have had few better or finer screen dramas than 'Blind Husbands.'"

Again this impulsive young Irishman was off on another subject. For fifteen more minutes he spoke of Stroheim's mental qualifications and wide literary knowledge. Before I had time to coax him back on the subject of Rex Ingram he had launched into a discussion on why David Griffith is the greatest of them all.

"We are all pupils of his. He leads and we follow. Any time any director believes he has made a picture as good as Griffith, along comes a new production with something new and again we are all followers. He creates and we copy."

Coming after "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," the best production of the war ever made, and as fine a translation of a fine story as any of us have ever seen, he paid David Griffith a real tribute.

Rex Ingram will go far. He has youth, he has brains, he has ambition, and he has temperament. He is also very handsome. The latter may be incidental, but none the less interesting. He has the blue-gray eyes of Ireland, and the whimsical wit of the Irish. He sympathizes so deeply with his country he longs to put on a big film play and let the world see how Ireland has been oppressed.

All Mr. Ingram's affections are not centered on motion pictures. As a recreation he occasionally models. Interesting as this may be, his career as a sculptor will now fade in the background. He has found himself in pictures --and when the public sees "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," there will be many laurel wreaths for young Mr. Ingram. We need him, his fine sense of proportion and his artistic idea of screen drama.

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Ernst Lubitsch

January 1, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The eyes of the American film industry have been focused on Ernst Lubitsch, the young German director, who more than any other foreign maker of pictures has established himself as a man of international reputation. From the moment Mr. Lubitsch stepped off the American steamship from Bremen he has been followed by newspaper reporters and film men, who have lingered to hear from his own lips the question of his success.

Unless they speak German or have an interpreter, they will fare very badly, because Mr. Lubitsch speaks no English. His German is spun off so quickly, the German one learned at school is absolutely of no use, except to catch an occasional phrase.

I met Mr. Lubitsch in the offices of the United Plays. Offices that looked more as if they might have belonged to the suite of a grand duchess or a member of the reigning family. Whoever thought to find a grand piano with

a cerise-colored drape, with curtains and heavy carpets to match, marble statuary, pictures and other visible semblance of elegance on Broadway? I rubbed my eyes to see if I had not suddenly stepped into an Arabian Nights chapter instead of in a business office. But no, apparently business is transacted in these luxurious offices.

Then Mr. Lubitsch came and I forgot the background in my interest in the young German, who is about 29 years old and has a smile that is infectious. He was dressed in a light-colored suit, apparently ready-made, and only a distant cousin to the producer that comes from our Fifth avenue tailors, but his clothes were only incidental.

He started speaking German at a rate of forty miles a moment, asking me long questions, and punctuating each remark with a flourish of his arms.

"Please translate," I asked Mr. Blumenthal. "He is speaking so fast I cannot catch a word he is saying."

And so Ben Blumenthal stepped into the breach and followed Mr. Lubitsch with a literal translation.

I did manage to understand before Mr. Blumenthal started his interpretation that Mr. Lubitsch believes our American films are "sehr gut."

"Take 'Forbidden Fruit' as an example, the little things (Mr. Lubitsch meant the details) are amazing. I noticed a girl troubled over the proper fork to use. She stopped short at her fish fork and waited for her hostess to proceed so she would make no mistake. Such care for the minor things is wonderful and is typical of the excellence of American direction."

Mr. Lubitsch spoke of "Broken Blossoms" as being very popular in Germany. "It is so beautiful," he said, "so artistic. Mr. Griffith is a wonderful director to be able to put such beauty on the screen."

Through Mr. Blumenthal's apt interpretation I gathered that things had not been so rosy in making "Pharaoh's Wife" as Mr. Lubitsch had expected. A little of the spirit of American unrest crept into the studio. "Pharaoh's Wife," which Lubitsch made for Famous Players-Lasky, is an Egyptian story, a mammoth spectacle in which 25,000 men and women are employed. A great battle was in progress when one side of the army suddenly stopped work and refused

to go on with the picture.

"What is the trouble?" demanded Lubitsch.

"More money--money like the Americans get," was the cry.

This faction had no more been quieted with bigger salaries than the other side of the army stopped short and staged a little strike of its own. Both armies quieted, the picture progressed until the entire outfit put their heads together and with due accord furnished a strike that took the entire studio force to quiet.

"Pharaoh's Wife" will not be the cheap picture every one expected. Its cost is on a par with any spectacle made in America. And it seems likely, now that the Germans have learned not to work for nothing, that pictures made on Teutonic ground will hereafter rank in price with our American-made product.

Mr. Lubitsch was taken on a tour of inspection of the American motion picture theatre. He saw the Capitol, the Strand, the Rivoli and the Rialto.

"They are very beautiful," he said. "Much more pretentious than anything we have in Berlin. Our theatres have no such elaborate programs and are not designed with so much thought and care. They are but simple playhouses compared with these theatres."

In fact Mr. Lubitsch is the sort of young man who is prepared to give his unqualified endorsement to anything American. He is very good-natured: smiles continually. He has a personality that is both gracious and pleasing. He says he likes Charlie Chaplin better than any actor he has ever seen and the last time a Chaplin picture played in Berlin he went three times. Harold Lloyd is also a great favorite of Mr. Lubitsch. He thinks he is one of our best actors.

Perhaps one reason for his interest in our comedians is the fact he started in life playing comedy roles. It was Max Reinhardt who discovered him and engaged him for his own theatres. His success was rapid and he toured Europe with the Reinhardt company. At the time when Lubitsch had made a place for himself on the European stage Paul Davidson, owner of numerous German film undertakings, saw him acting the leading role of the devil in

"The Green Flute." Impressed by the young man's talent, Mr. Davidson talked films to the young actor, and a contract was signed making young Lubitsch director and scenario writer, as well as actor of his own company. His first undertaking was "Lubitsch Comedies." It was not until after that he became identified with bigger features, but it is as an historical director that he has become recognized in this country. It was he who discovered Pola Negri, who was at that time an unknown cabaret singer. Her charm and her talent, combined with his directorial skill, made "Carmen or Gypsy Blood" one of the best-known pictures in the world market. Then followed "Passion," "Deception," and "One Arabian Night."

Mr. Lubitsch was highly amused at the questions asked about the papier-mache sets, which we have been told are a part of his historical settings.

He laughed merrily and said he had never heard of them.

"Pharaoh's Wife" took six months to produce, but it took a very short time to cut and edit. Mr. Lubitsch does his own cutting and editing and believes no director should entrust this work to any one else, whether he is German, American or English.

After a brief visit here he will go West to look over the studios in California. He is in favor of our directors visiting Germany and European directors visiting America for an exchange of ideas. Although his first picture was for an American concern and belongs to Famous Players-Lasky, we understand there are many film offers being made in his direction. Good directors are scarce.

He said as I was leaving to make room for several other newspaper folk who were waiting, "Next time we meet I shall try and learn English."

He said most of the sentence in good English, which makes me wonder if he doesn't know more English than he pretends. Foreigners are always such expert linguists.

As for Pola Negri, he says she is everything charming a woman should be, and it is unnecessary for him to say more because she will visit America early next year. This was said in German, with a twinkle in his eye. In fact we suspect the young man of having a great sense of humor. He laughed

so frequently and with such enjoyment.

* * * * *

Fred Niblo

August 13, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

After Fred Niblo made "The Mark of Zorro" and "The Three Musketeers," two screen hits in rapid succession, the wise-acres leaned back in their comfortable arm chairs and, drawing a long breath, said:

"He cannot do it again."

Then "Blood and Sand" burst across the Broadway film horizon in a skyrocket of phenomenal glory, and the film world took another deep breath and said with awe:

"He has done it"--wondering what secret method he had used to bring this miracle to pass. And now Mr. Niblo has come to New York to arrange for distribution with Metro of the productions to be made by his own company. Broadway was his playground for a great many years and his coming and going while events of interest in the past were by no means cause for any special demonstration. As George Cohan's brother-in-law and an actor himself of ability, Fred Niblo has always had a host of friends and admirers, but he was never regarded in the past as one for whom the velvet carpet should be laid. But with three huge pictorial successes to his credit his arrival in Manhattan this time has equaled the visit of a foreign potentate--and the town is his.

Fortunately he has a rare sense of humor and an idea of the fitness of things, so that all this attention hasn't turned his head and hasn't even changed his attitude toward life. Having known Enid Bennett, the attractive and lovable wife of this famous one ever since she came to this country, and won all hearts by her quaint manners and her English accent, I was curious to meet her husband--the director of the hour.

An occasion was provided when Metro entertained Mr. Niblo at a luncheon. Just by way of showing the interest every one feels in his work every seat at the table was occupied with film writers, all eager to hear from his own lips how he was able to make the grade three times in succession.

"I had to learn to make pictures," he said, after we were seated at the table and he had listened to the united praise of some thirty people. "After I married Miss Bennett, I gave up the stage to direct her. Some of those first pictures were pretty bad, but by hard work and by profiting by past mistakes and applying my knowledge of the theatre, I was able to overcome some of the things that interfered with my progress as a director in the beginning."

This admission was only obtained after considerable coaxing. Fred Niblo doesn't talk about himself. He doesn't swagger and he isn't the type of director who wears puttees and affects a soft silk shirt and flowing tie just to look the part. He is a sincere, real person, who is honestly trying to keep his place at the top of the ladder by hard work. He doesn't tell how he had to teach the actor all he knows, and what difficulty he had in getting the cameraman to get certain effects. In all the conversation he did not say any words that detracted from the glory of any one who had a part in "Blood and Sand." He spoke of Rodolph Valentino in the highest terms, both as actor and a man. June Mathis's faithfulness to the author's text and her genius in writing continuity came in for his earnest praise. Douglas Fairbanks's knowledge of the techniques of films and his ability to make pictures was another subject to which Mr. Niblo warmed, giving Doug the lion's share of credit for "Zorro" and "Musketeers."

While Mr. Niblo is full of enthusiasm and high hopes for his future work, he isn't carried away with his own importance and an idea that he has conquered the film world.

Our conversation was punctuated with talk of Enid and the baby. The baby is a year old now and her father admits she is probably the finest young lady in captivity. As for Enid--he doesn't care how much people talk of her beauty and charm. It's a subject that does not bore him.

Although Mr. Niblo admits Miss Bennett was instrumental in getting him to come into pictures, he had considerable experience making travelogues. During the lifetime of Josephine Cohan, his first wife, he traveled in Africa, and in remote spots in this uncivilized country he was able to obtain some exceptional films. He says he would probably have continued to give Burton Holmes a race for his money, if his funds had not given out and he and his wife had to return to the States to get some more of that necessary article--U. S. dollars.

The luncheon brought forth the interesting news that the motion picture rights to "Captain Applejack" have been purchased for Mr. Niblo and will serve as his first independent production.

"At first I was a little afraid of 'Applejack,'" he said. "It is a delicate thing that requires careful handling. The loss of the dialogue may affect its value, too, but I believe it will make an unusual picture. I want to make it as a straight story without any obvious comedy."

Mr. Niblo said the part where Wallace Eddinger kills the Chinaman in a dream will have to be eliminated to please the "wrecking crew"--that elegant phrase meaning the w. k. censor board.

"We always keep the 'wrecking crew' in mind," he said. "We had some thrilling scenes in the bull fight in 'Blood and Sand,' when Valentino really struggles with the bull, but we were afraid of the censorial scissors and so we cut all that stuff out before they had a chance to ruin the continuity of our picture"

"Captain Applejack" will be followed by three other equally well known stage plays, and if Fred Niblo continues smashing records as a director--well, we shall have him in a class by himself. He doesn't dare hope to have all his productions 100 per cent, that is too much to expect, but he is going to try mighty hard to come as near that average as is humanly possible.

And just to prove Mr. Niblo finds other subjects beside his own skill worth discussing he had many pleasant things to say about "The Tailor Made Man," Charles Ray's next picture. He also said he hoped to direct Mr. Ray in a picture some day. He considers him one of the best actors on the screen

and a star whose future will continue to be one of the bright spots in the industry.

Tomorrow Mr. Niblo will leave the scene of all this glory and hit the trail back to Enid and the baby and work. He promises to come again and bring them with him next time.

* * * * *

John S. Robertson

November 5, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

John Robertson progressed so far with the formation of his own company that he even had the necessary capital to finance his project. He resigned from Famous Players-Lasky and refused five definite offers from five companies to produce pictures, all because back in his mind was the overwhelming desire to be his own boss. Every man has that desire. It's one of the foundations upon which human nature is built. Then without any warning John Robertson dropped all talk of forming his own company and signed a contract with Inspiration. Speedy work on the part of Charles Duell, said one man who will never get over losing Robertson. But most people who know John Robertson felt there must be something back of this sudden change other than Charles Duell's persuasive tongue.

At the Algonquin--which is to the actors and directors what 729 Seventh is to the exchange men and theatre owners--Mr. Robertson explained why he turned down the five prominent producers and signed on the dotted line with Inspiration, which is the newest producing company of them all.

"The responsibility of being in absolute control is enormous," said Mr. Robertson. "When Mr. Duell, as president of Inspiration, came to me with an offer I said no at first. I did not dread the responsibility exactly, but I know so little about business. I can make pictures, I can direct stars, but I cannot sell my product. I was originally an actor, and few actors have any

business ability. Then Mr. Duell and I talked again. He offered me everything I had planned to have myself, with a freedom of all the business end, and I accepted."

Mr. Robertson, in explaining why he changed his mind, said the idea of being held responsible for other people's money was a thing that was too important to be entered into without looking at it from every angle.

When John Robertson said that he had been an actor I thought I had misunderstood him. But after repeating the question he assured me long before he had ever had any hopes of making a picture like "Sentimental Tommy" he had been an actor. He went out to the Vitagraph and worked as Anita Stewart's leading man, under the direction of Ralph Ince.

After studying the technique of direction, Albert Smith permitted him to try his skill, and he did so well he lost his job as an actor and became a director. From Vitagraph he went to Famous Players-Lasky, where for five years he turned out some of their finest productions.

I mentioned "Sentimental Tommy," although possibly of all the pictures he made for Famous this one brought the least financial return. One of the most artistic pictures ever made, and one of the few that really reflects the spirit of Barrie--this film has never been considered a big box office attraction.

Mr. Robertson said at first there was a suspicion that casting people who were not stars for the leading roles might have something to do with the difficulty in bringing people into the theatre to see it, but when the same fate happened to "Peter Ibbetson," which boasted of Elsie Ferguson, Wallace Reid, Montagu Love and an entire cast of stars, the fault seemed to be more with the type of picture.

I was glad to hear Robertson say, even if "Sentimental Tommy" had not approached the other films in monetary returns, he had never regretted making it. He said he felt repaid in London when Sir James Barrie complimented him and told him how much he liked the picturization of his story.

"Footlights" is another pet of Mr. Robertson's. This reversed the order of things, however, and brought into the Paramount treasury enough money to

make up for the shortage of "Sentimental Tommy." Based on Rita Weiman's story, "Footlights" is Elsie Ferguson's best and most popular picture.

John Robertson has great imagination; that is one reason the majority of his pictures have been so successful. He sees things with a picture eye and measures the possibilities of the camera before he starts work. His actors all adore him, and enjoy working with him because of his appreciation of the value of big scenes, and his knowledge of dramatic effects--a thing so many directors lack.

Having just finished "Tess," Mr. Robertson was full of Mary Pickford's extraordinary ability.

"She is the most wonderful girl I ever met," he said. "She knows everything about picture making, from the most technical side to the dramatic possibilities. I thought with her fame and success she would probably resent taking direction. But she sought it. She was as nervous as a debutante for fear she would not get the most out of every scene."

Mr. Robertson said frequently they had appealed to Douglas Fairbanks for an opinion. When asked for advice he would give it, but he would never venture a suggestion until asked for it.

"Their married life," said Mr. Robertson, "is ideal. They work together, play together, and plan their pictures together. Just the way people should do. I feel strongly on that subject, because my wife has been such a help and inspiration to me."

Mrs. Robertson, as Josephine Lovett, has written most of Mr. Robertson's scenarios, and has helped him to visualizing them for the screen.

"I was tempted to accept Miss Pickford's offer to remain with her, and if Mr. Duell had not persuaded me to come into the Inspiration fold I think I would have made her next picture.

"Inspiration offers me a big chance," said Mr. Robertson. "I shall have Miss Lillian Gish, who, like Miss Pickford, is an actress of brains and experience. I feel having all three of the Inspiration players--Richard Barthelmess, Dorothy Gish and Lillian--I shall have an opportunity to put all my ideas into operation."

Mr. Robertson said his first picture would be a Richard Barthelmess feature. The play has not yet been chose, although Joseph Hergeshimer's "Bright Shawl" has been discussed as a possible vehicle.

Over at the Algonquin one must always talk fast--there are so many people to interrupt--and we did talk fast, for we had many things to say, but an hour came and went quickly and we both had other engagements.

* * * * *

Victor Seastrom

November 26, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Victor Seastrom will never win a prize in a talking contest. His silences are far more eloquent than his conversation. But when he does talk he has something to say, and what he says is not prefixed with the pronoun I, and filled with a long account of personal experiences. He is unbelievably modest, so much so that when he named his salary it is said F. J. Godsol gave him more than he asked, giving as his reason the man who made "At the Stroke of Midnight," "Jerusalem," "Eyvinde of the Hills," "Sir Arne's Treasure" and "You and I" is worth every penny he paid him.

Now you will admit this doesn't sound like a motion picture story. But Victor Seastrom is unlike a motion picture man--at least not any I have ever met. He is modest to the point of shyness, and approaches his new job with a fear that he may not be as good as Mr. Godsol and others who have seen his work know him to be. Coue would say Mr. Seastrom needs a little Coueism to give him confidence, and any one meeting him for the first time might agree with the Nancy pharmacist, but having seen some of the Seastrom pictures I will have to modify that and say he may need Coue for himself but not for his work.

After much effort on my own part and some prompting by Howard Dietz, who went with me to the Plaza Hotel to call on the Swedish director, he modestly

volunteered some of his ideas.

"In Sweden," he said, "we erect monuments to Ibsen, Strindberg, Bjornson and other famous writers. In America you give your homage to your Senators and the men prominent in political life. The student body in our country is very highly regarded; in your country it is not considered important."

Mr. Seastrom, with reservation and without any thought of offending America, went on to say in his country poverty is no barrier to education. The poorer classes know art and literature and music as well as the rich. Swedish audiences are ready for Ibsen and Strindberg, but the American audience must be prepared by any films in which no attempt is made to modify a story and give it the usual conventional happy ending. He said it in less the critical language perhaps, but the meaning is the same.

Being a stranger in a strange country this exceedingly modest director is feeling his way along the ground and not doing any moving until he is sure of himself. Coming from a country where he has worked in a badly equipped studio with no facilities and where he has to do everything from washing the film to photographing it, he is amazed at the vastness of it all. Instead of saying:

"Well, here I am. Now American film history will begin." He says: "I am here and I want to do my best. I hope I can please the American public."

Mr. Seastrom, hearing how fast Americans move, expected to see men walk over each other on the street, and women trampled under foot in the mad rush to succeed; expected to be caught in the commercial maelstrom and swept away in the fast-moving current. Instead he found a calm people who had time to listen to him, and who had watched his work with interest and admiration.

"I was agreeably surprised," he confessed with a smile. "I am lonesome for my family, but I have to admit this town grows on one."

After Mr. Seastrom tries a little Hollywood air and begins his motion picture work, he will send for his family. His wife is Ethel Erastoff, a famous actress, who is now playing the lead in "Loyalties" in Copenhagen.

"I went to see the American production of 'Loyalties,'" he said.

"How does it compare with your wife's work, we asked him.

"I do not know," he replied, "I have never seen my wife but once on the stage."

"What?" both Mr. Dietz and I exclaimed in one breath, thinking that perhaps Fanny Hurst's doctrine had struck the Seastrom home.

"I take her to the theatre and call for her," he said, "but I never see her on the stage. It makes her so nervous when she knows I am in the audience she cannot act. 'If you come to see me,' she said, 'you will not love me.'"

So, modesty, we believe, must run in the Seastrom family.

This man, who was discovered by America in Sweden, and who with Pola Negri and Ernst Lubitsch has come to the United States to remove the gnawing fear in the American hearts that there is a threatened foreign invasion, has directed as well as played in his pictures. The term artist has been wrongfully applied so many times we hesitate to use it in the case of this man, who is in reality an artist, but it is the only word we can think of that properly expresses Victor Seastrom's ability.

Victory Seastrom may bring us just what we need--a little more subtlety, less obvious explanation and the delicate touches that make his pictures more than mere films.

"Americans," he said sadly, "do not like beautiful mountains, rivers and trees. They must have action. In Sweden we can express so much with our scenery we love to see it."

About this time the conversation began to lag and Freckles, who is called the Wesley Barry of press agents, began to talk in grandiloquent tones about the Vikings, asking Mr. Seastrom if he came from a family of Vikings.

But alas and alack our stalwart and handsome hero failed to rise to Freckles's bait and only shook his head and said:

"My family have followed the sea if that is what you mean."

It wasn't all Freckles meant. He who loves romance smelt a story in which a noble Viking of the Northland figured and because we hated to have him disappointed we broke up the party--suspecting Mr. Seastrom was delighted. He seemed so worried for fear between us Freckles and I would

concoct a story that should not be printed. I hope we have not wronged him.

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WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 68 -- August 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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Six Interviews with Buster Keaton
Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Seven

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

In 1992 there was a movie titled "Forever" which dramatized (or should we say fantasized) the William Desmond Taylor murder case. We had not mentioned it before, because the film was so utterly wretched. But a detailed review is available at (this address should all be on one line with no spaces)
<http://www.tvguide.com/movies/mopic/cgi-bin/page.c?type=mpg&page=/movies/mopic/data/36/36109.htm>

The broadcast dates for the 1998 episode of "Mysteries & Scandals" dealing with the Taylor murder, on the E! cable channel: June 8, 9, 10, and 14.

Six Interviews with Buster Keaton

In past issues of TAYLOROLOGY, we have reprinted interviews with silent film comedians Charlie Chaplin (issues 36, 46, 51), Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle (28), and Harold Lloyd (53). Some fans of Buster Keaton have requested that we also reprint Keaton interviews, so here are six of them, conducted between 1920 and 1923.

* * * * *

May 16, 1920

Grace Kingsley

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Buster Bursts Into Stardom

"I gotta do some sad scenes. Why, I never tried to make anybody cry in my life! And I go 'round all the time dolled up in kippie clothes--wear everything but a corset! Can't stub my toe in this picture nor anything! Just imagine having to play-act all the time without ever getting hit with anything!"

It was Buster Keaton, bleating out his sorrows about portraying Bertie, the Lamb at Metro. He is appearing in "The New Henrietta," ["The Saphead"] prior to starting work on his new starring contract in comedies.

"Don't know why they chose me for the part, anyhow, only I've got a blank pan. Saw a nice fluffy pie on the set the other day that would've looked good on the hero's face, but he got away just in time. Winchell Smith watches me all the time. He's the author, and he's afraid I'll do something all wrong. I had to be shaved in a scene, the other day, and Mr. Smith was scared to death. He thought I might try to get funny and eat the soap! Mr. Smith certainly does worry about me."

From which it will be seen that the role of Bertie the Lamb does cramp Buster's style something awful!

From war and playing in slapstick comedy with Fatty Arbuckle, both extra hazardous professions, Buster'll tell the world, he went smack into the regular drammy in "The New Henrietta." When I saw him the other day, he was all dolled up in his moonlights, but he says that when playing the regular drama gets him to feeling kind of numb, he goes over and does funny falls on Nazimova's high-brow set. That relieves him.

"Fatty won't speak to me in these clothes," went on Buster, mournfully, "and neither will Luke, Fatty's dog. I'm losing all my friends. And on top of all this, I gotta do some love scenes."

But there's a bit of consolation. Keaton has his top sergeant working for him now. The top sergeant he had over in France is his property boy now! Buster was in the war nine months, you know. Says he went over for a little peace and quiet, away from Fatty Arbuckle's studio. Just that he volunteered for service, crossed and got a decoration or so is neither here nor there. What he wanted was more peace than he could ever get in Fatty's studio, and he declares he got it too!

But he never knew that when he came back he'd be called on to play a denatured character like Bertie the Lamb!

However, the agony won't last much longer, because Buster has his own comedy company now, you know. He even has his first comedy all planned out. He says he's following Fatty Arbuckle's method, gets a plot first, then builds the picture, leaving all the plot out. He says it works fine. The first story is to be about a portable house and a young married couple, which certainly does sound like a jazzy combination for comedy.

Being a star now, of course, makes everything about Buster Keaton interesting. Mere trifles like the color of his ties and what breed of car he runs are now raised to the dignity of themes for reams of press-agent stuff. Even the paper shortage won't stop it. And so, delving down into Buster's past, we find him as a youth a member of the Three Keatons. Maybe you remember him in vaudeville; anyhow, you'll try to.

"Father didn't know what a stage whisper was," explained Buster, "and he was an awful kidder. Speaking of Mme. Nazimova, we traveled on the bill with her when she was playing 'War Brides.' I remember one day the famous lady was standing in the wings watching us, father peeped over at her, then at the stage manager beside her. 'You'll have to get Mme. Nazimova out of the wings,' he admonished the stage manager. 'She annoys us!' Mme. Nazimova laughed right along with the audience, too!"

When Keaton came to town on one of his vaudeville tours, about four years ago, he heard that Roscoe Arbuckle needed a comedian and he went out to see the rotund star. Next day he started to work. But each had much to learn about the other.

"The first day I worked in the picture comedy we were discussing the action.

"'Shall I fall?' I asked innocently.

"'If it comes natural,' they answered.

"They threw a safe or something at me and it came natural to fall all right! But they didn't know what a nice little playmate they'd acquired. When a fight was staged that afternoon I cleaned out the bunch. After that we all got on beautifully together.

"Oh, yes, and I gotta do some love scenes, too! And I never did make love before in my life. What? Oh, yes, of course, I mean before the camera. But, anyhow," and Buster loosened the Arrow collar around his neck, "but anyhow, the camera can't catch my blushes!"

* * * * *

December 1920

Malcolm H. Oettinger

PICTURE-PLAY MAGAZINE

Tumbling to Fame

If you're a "big-time" vaudeville devotee you'll remember "The Three

Keatons." You may not remember the name, but, if you ever saw them, you couldn't forget the big comedy Irishman who used to pick up his five-year-old son by the back of the coat collar and hurl him across the stage into the middle of the back drop.

The animated football, known as "Buster" Keaton, and now grown up, is being featured in a new set of comedies about to be released by Metro.

It was an easy step from the rough-and-tumble work of the vaudeville stage to screen comedies, and Buster is quite satisfied with the career for which he began in his infancy, for his first public appearance as a member of "The Three Keatons" was when, at the age of six weeks, he was carried onto the stage on a tray by his father! And Pa Keaton didn't wait any longer than necessary to begin making more vigorous use of his young son and heir as comedy material.

"I've simply been brought up being knocked down," said the scion of the Keaton family, when I recently met him at the studio. "Pop's idea of comedy was to throw me through every backdrop on the Keith circuit, and I'll bet I've taken more punishment in the way of being used as a human mop than Bat Nelson, Ad Wolgast, and Jim Jeffries combined. The funny part of it is that I like it. Last month I did my first--and only--straight part in 'The Henrietta'--the Bertie part--and between you and me, it was a bore. There weren't any falls, and for me a picture without falls is as bad as Niagara in the same fix."

Keaton really prefers slapstick to straight comedy.

"It's harder work than the 'dressed-up drama,' but I get a much bigger kick out of it. I don't act, anyway. The stuff is all injected as we go along. My pictures are made without script or written directions of any kind. We simply figure out enough story to build sets around, then we pull our gags and 'quick stuff' in the set as we happen on the ideas. After we feel that we've shot enough to make about six pictures, we assemble it, rip out whatever is left of the 'story'--and make one picture out of what's left. That means an enormous lot of work. This picture with the trick scaffold in it that I'm working on now is called, 'It's a Cinch!' But take it from me,

the title-writer is a liar. It ISN'T!"

Buster tumbled into the movies by way of the Arbuckle chuckle foundry, where he fitted in harmoniously with Roscoe and jumping Al St. John. Then Fatty eased into what Pa Keaton's boy calls the "dressed-up" drama, and the young knockabout comic sought other fields. "Vaudeville has given you all of this acrobatic training," I said. "Tell me--what have the movies given you?"

"A touring car and a cottage smothered in flowers!"

* * * * *

October 1921
Willis Goldbeck
MOTION PICTURE

Only Three Weeks

"Silence is of the gods; only monkeys chatter."

I sat once in a famous theater in the London Haymarket, and heard that proverb drip from the oily tongue of an aged Chinese philosopher. It glittered for the moment on the surface of my mind and then sank into the depths; depths termed by a recently famous philosopher and theorist, the Unconscious.

I sat, not very long ago, in Wonderful Harry's restaurant, opposite the Metro Studio, in Hollywood, beside Buster Keaton, a recently famous comedian, and that proverb, lost for two years or more, rose again, uninvited, to the surface of my mind. If silence be of the gods, I thought, then Buster's middle name is Zeus.

I had come to interview him upon his marriage with Natalie Talmadge, a marriage, then, of just three weeks' duration. My first conclusion was that whatever else Natalie might suffer from, it would never be from "gab," Buster simply hasn't the gift.

But there are certain limits overstepping which virtues suddenly find

themselves vices. I've an idea that the gold of Buster's silence would quickly turn to dross if, when he finally does open his lips, he didn't inevitably spill wisdom, or something sounding so deceptively like it that the uncritical ear can accept it without question, and find sustenance in it of sufficient substance to carry it over the next impelling gap of silence.

I was introduced to Buster and he squeezed my hand, gentle enough.

I was told to have a seat in Buster's dressing room, and I took one. Buster concentrated his attention upon removing his make-up, allowing himself a furtive stare in my direction now and then, but saying nothing. I continued to sit.

Three or four jovial henchmen then burst in to help create the confidential atmosphere so necessary to revelation of marital secrets. Buster continued to maintain his enormous silence, but he paused in his business of cleaning up to join in a jig, started by one of his jovial henchmen. He shuffled and jumped there, silently, his face never altering a hair's breath from its habitual solemnity. It was grotesque. He might have been a marionette jerking on the end of his strings. But presently the three or four stout ones, hunger overcoming them, lumbered off in the direction of the restaurant. For the moment there was only Buster, his publicity man, and I.

"It's too soon yet to say anything," Buster's voice coming so suddenly, seemed tremendous. "I've only been married three weeks."

"Three weeks!" I murmured. "Where have I heard that before? It seems to recall tiger skins. And, yes, I believe that there was a lady, Elinor, who found that much could happen in three weeks." I only murmured it, and Buster was concerned with the birth of an epigram. He finally delivered it.

"Marriage is fine as an institution, but bad as a habit."

And later: "I shall never join the 'Why, dear' club. You know how it is. A man comes home late. Wife asks him where he was. He starts to stammer an explanation. 'Why, dear, you see I--' No, I shall never join the 'Why dear' club."

From all of which it may be gathered that Buster is an old-fashioned

husband. He has issued the pronunciamiento that Natalie shall not work again before the camera; and Natalie probably won't.

Buster is an individual. His silence, his solemnness, set him distinctly apart. I had been told that off the screen he was quite different, animated, smiling, even laughing, most of the time. He who told me had met him in the hospital where he was recovering from a broken leg. Perhaps it takes hospitals, or something equally as lugubrious, to make him laugh. He didn't even grin that afternoon.

His eyes have something of a basilisk quality about them, as much as brown eyes can. He keeps them half concealed under their lids, so that they seem expressionless.

He is small but for all that an athlete. There seems to be no ill effect from his broken leg. He sustained it when a bit of revolving machinery on a complicated set went wrong.

His romance with Natalie Talmadge started five years ago. Despite the hints and rumors of possible disaster that immediately preceded the marriage --it was said that a rival for Natalie's hand had appeared and threatened to oust Buster from her affection--there was never any question in Natalie's mind. The only hope for the rival, a wealthy merchant, lay in his own mind. Natalie, when she was secretary for the Fatty Arbuckle company, out here in California, had admitted her love for Buster. Then he was playing in support of Fatty. They decided to wait, before committing themselves to any vows, until Buster had himself achieved his own company, and made it an assured success. He had accomplished that when he sent his famous wire to Palm Beach, Fla., asking Natalie to marry him. Her monosyllabic acceptance, just a plain "Yes," was enough for Buster. As soon as his leg had mended so that he could hobble about with a stick, he took a train for the East.

One of the most interesting and least mentioned features of the Keaton-Talmadge marriage is that it completes what is perhaps the most powerful oligarchy in pictures today. There are Norma, Constance and Natalie. Norma is the wife of Joseph Schenck. Schenck's influence is far more reaching than those unfamiliar with the film world ever dream. Norma is at the peak of her

career now. Constance is still rising. Buster has just begun. They are all world-famous, all earners of fabulous salaries. It is quite certain that in aggregate wealth they outstrip even the famous Pickford-Fairbanks combine. It is doubtful whether they equal the former Pickford-Moore family, as it was before divorce and tragedy rent it asunder. That will probably stand for all time as the greatest combination in filmdom, both in aggregate earnings and world fame.

Buster, who before his marriage was making comedies for the Metro Pictures Corporation, has now definitely aligned himself with his sisters-in-law, Norma and Constance, as a First National star. He has signed a contract which calls for eight pictures a year for a period of three years.

So far, though, it is quite true that only three weeks have elapsed at the time of this writing, the Keaton barque has traveled through quiet, untroubled waters. For the nonce, Buster and Natalie have come to anchor in a beautiful residence in Beverly Hills, which Buster had provided for his bride before he went East to fetch her.

It is not a venturesome prediction to say that Buster's phlegm will probably prove a worthy sea anchor through whatever storms the two may be destined to pass. Silence is like a rock. Rages break over it impotently. I'm not hinting, either, that Natalie's rages are frequent. But she will be an unusual wife if she doesn't have at least one.

Between mouthfuls--we had long since followed the four jovial ones to the lunch table--Buster paused to remark solemnly: "The marriage bond is like an elastic. You can stretch it a lot, but the one who stretches it too far always gets the snap-back."

And again: "Marriage--nothing can compare with it, not even the straight-jacket."

* * * * *

October 8, 1922
Gertrude Chase

Buster Keaton Can Smile and Yawn, Too, If He Wishes

A small dark man stepped from the elevator at the Hotel Ambassador looking as solemn as an owl, which is the old-fashioned way of saying as solemn as Buster Keaton, for it was none other than the man without a smile.

He followed us into the reception room and sat down with the deliberation of a patient setting himself in a dentist's chair.

Then he surprised us with a smile that would rank highly with any we have ever seen.

"You really can smile," we exclaimed, and realized at once that the remark was in the class with the one made upon meeting twins and saying, "How often you must be mistaken for each other."

Buster did not reply, he suppressed a yawn and taking our cue, we asked him about New York night life.

"Terrible," he answered. "I haven't missed a night at the theatre. Then there are the races and now the World Series, no wonder I'm under weight.

"We are seeing as many plays as we can with a view toward getting a new picture for Constance. The one I would like to see her do is 'Kiki,' but it may be hard to get."

Mrs. Buster, Natalie, the youngest of the three Talmadges, it seems has no desire to go back into pictures. She is busy taking care of her four-months old son. Expressing a wish to see the baby, we were told that he was airing on Park Avenue and that we could find him when we went out.

"You can't miss him, he looks just like me," said the proud father. "He has a black buggy and a white nurse."

The conversation turned to Buster Keaton's own childhood when, as the little boy of the vaudeville act known as the "Three Keatons," he kept the Gerry Society anxious because they couldn't find a bruise on him, although he was tossed expertly about the stage in a way that made the audience hurt.

"I got so used to it that I took my clothes off every time I saw an officer. We had the roughest act on the boards and used to play at old Hammerstein's so often that we kept a set of props there.

"By the way, how is Sam McKee, of the Telegraph? He used to be a great friend of ours." We told him of the funny little picture of him given us by Mr. McKee, showing him in the make-up of an old Irishman, the duplicate of that worn by his dad, and he laughed at the memory of his own quaint little figure.

It was while playing vaudeville alone that he got his first opportunity to go into pictures. That was only five years ago and in that time they have become so popular that the time has come for Buster to be seen in a feature comedy, which he intends to start work on when he returns to California.

Speaking of the material for his two-reel pictures, Keaton said that his scenarios were usually on postal cards.

"Ideas just come to us as we go along, for instance, in 'The Boat' I got the idea from an actual occurrence. The manager of a theatre on the old canal at Utica built himself a swell cruiser in the cellar of the theatre and had to knock out a side of the theatre to get it into the water.

"In comedy, like any other kind of picture, you have to do stuff that will be appreciated outside of New York and Chicago. In big cities the people are sophisticated enough to understand travesty and the more subtle bits of humor, but they don't get over elsewhere. Comedy is best when it rouses the curiosity of the audience. As an example of the kind of thing I mean, take this situation. A man sees a pretty girl get into one of those 'Old Mill' boats in Coney Island. He gets in the same boat and it passes out of the picture, the action progresses with no sign of the boat for many feet of film, when it reappears the man has a black eye and other damages. It is simple, but there is nothing that requires more knowledge and has a greater number of rules or technical stunts than comedy slapstick or the other kind."

Born and reared in his work, Buster Keaton gives you the impression of knowing it thoroughly from the ground up. He is becoming more in demand as a comedian every year, and if there is one thing the screen needs it is this

kind of entertainment well done by people who understand it.

In parting, we asked him if he had any statement to make to the great American public. To our surprise, he rose and said: "I certainly have," with all the conviction in the world.

This was more than we had expected.

"Yes, yes, what is it?" we asked, all a-twitter.

"I hope the Yanks win," said Buster.

* * * * *

March 1923

Malcolm H. Oettinger

PICTURE-PLAY MAGAZINE

Low Comedy as a High Art

For a long time it was considered a breach of critical etiquette, if there be such a thing, to write of any one engaged in such a lowly sphere as that of comedy. It was little short of lese majesty to strum one's lyre in praise of such funny fellows as Fred Mace, John Bunny, Mack Swain, and the then blooming Chaplin. Some few did it: venturesome souls, but as a general thing it was discouraged.

Times, capriciously enough, have changed. Today Charlot is hymned by the literati and the cognoscenti, the beautiful and the damning. The mere mention of his name is sufficient to start a feverish discussion in the highest circles, even including the well-known vicious one at the Algonquin. The critics have decided that the abominable movies have produced something worth while in this harlequin of the mustachios and baggy trousers.

Five years hence they will discover Buster Keaton.

In writing of the leading drolls of the flittering photos, it is tempting to take a leaf from Eugene Field's "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," for it is conceded, almost without question, that the preeminent names today are Chaplin, Keaton, and Lloyd. The methods of the three are utterly unlike.

Each leads an individual School of the Snicker.

The comedy of Chaplin is most often elusive, bordering on the serious if not the tragic. Nothing more typical can be instanced than his moment of contemplation beside the manhole, in "The Kid"--an amazing commingling of pathos and humor. In an earlier two-reeler, "The Bank," the great comedian also officiated at the wedding of smile and tear. It is characteristic of Chaplin to appeal to philosophers as well as to flappers.

We laugh with Lloyd, but we laugh at Keaton. These two may better be compared than Lloyd and Chaplin or Keaton and Chaplin, because Charlie is so infinitely superior, amusing though the other pair are. Neither Keaton nor Lloyd attempt to reach your funny bone through your heart: they openly tickle you. For this reason, most of all, perhaps they are not in Chaplin's class. For Chaplin has always stood alone.

Many of Harold Lloyd's pictures have whole slices played in straight comedy vein. Keaton is rarely heroic; at such fleeting times he invariably makes a swift and laughter-grafting turn to grotesquerie. Buster's stuff borders on the realm of burlesque; Lloyd at times suggests a Willie Collier of the shadow stage. His is the school sponsored by Sidney Drew, embellished with quips and quirks and occasional stunts that are solely Lloyd's. Originality marks the method of all leaders, and certainly this is true of Chaplin, Keaton, and Lloyd.

"That's the one thing that I dread," Buster told me sadly. "I dread the day when we won't find another new wheeze to wrap up, when all the gags will have been sprung, when we're stumped for something new. That's what a comedian has to guard against: running out. That is why Charlie Chaplin makes his pictures so slowly. I know as a matter of fact that he takes thousands of feet of film on every picture, only to destroy it when he sees it in the projection room. And this carefulness is just what helps to make him a great artist."

Keaton is master of snicker and guffaw technique. His art is to work up a situation deliberately, to build it as logically and as systematically as a carpenter builds a house. Gags, Buster told me, are natural or mechanical.

"Both get laughs," he explained, "but the natural gag is the one we lay awake nights trying to dream of." And it is the mechanical gag that Keaton has mastered.

Take the situation in "The Boat," where, after having built a boat, he finds that he has not made the doorway large enough, and consequently, as the boat slides to the water, it pulls the shed down with it. Take the situation in "One Week." Buster has ordered a Sears-Roebuck bungalow for his bride-to-be. The wicked rival mixes the numerals on the various parts, and the comedy ensues when Buster attempts to assemble the jazzed sections.

This is mechanically perfect giggle material. But though one of the most adroit technicians of comedy. Buster fails to reach the heart, his pictures elude the sympathy.

It seems consistent to endow Chaplin with massive intellect, to read sermons into his capering feet. It is fairly simple to sympathize with the lovesick Harold Lloyd, upon occasion. But Keaton alone stands forth as the Trouper--unabashed, unaffected, unassuming, and--very like Shaw's Undershaft--unashamed!

"We just wrap up a little hokum," he will tell you. "We build up a little story on some sure-fire idea, throw in a dozen gags, if we can think of 'em, and let 'er ride. The scenario we use is written on the correspondence end of a picture post card. If it's lost its no great matter."

You cannot read hidden motifs into the Keaton spoolings. You cannot persuade him that there was a hint of satire concealed in his last comedy, or the one before that. You cannot coerce him into admitting that he planned an unique characterization which he has steadfastly maintained. He will take credit for nothing. Not even his make-up.

"The pancake hat and the oversized collar and the misfit suit and the slapstick shoes are my old vaudeville stand-bys. My father rigged me out as a third of The Three Keatons, when I was too young to 'originate' anything but a yowl! I've kept the same make-up ever since--guess I always will."

Solemnity is more than a habit with Keaton; it's ingrown. Throughout

our conversation his face was stony. Nor was this an exception to his usual attitude. I have seen him in the turmoil of a comic sequence, a business of break-away ladders, swinging ropes, and trapdoor scaffoldings; I have seen him eyeing the proceedings at one of Manhattan's most energizing nights clubs; I have seen him purring at his baby in father-like fashion; I have seen him casually viewing the day's rushes, and upon not one but all of these occasions Buster wore an expression that was infinitely more sphinxlike than the Sphinx ever thought of being. His is an entirely emotionless face, suggesting most of all, a mask. It is the ideal phiz for a droll pantaloon.

"You originated the idea of never smiling," I supposed.

But Buster refused to take credit for it. In the days of The Three Keatons, it seems, his father taught him never to crack a smile. The habit grew on him. Now it is so deeply rooted that it is almost impossible for him to grin.

It has long been one of the beliefs of the American Credo that all comedians are, off stage, lugubrious fellows, and never was a truth more apparent than in the appearance and behavior of Buster Keaton. His countenance is little short of funereal, his speech laconic, his outlook none too sanguine.

"Next I'm going back to the Coast to do a five-reel picture. No plots, you know. Just gags. But we'll space our laughs. If we ran five reels of the sort of stuff we cram into two, the audience would be tired before it was half over. So we'll plant the characters more slowly, use introductory bits, and all that.

"It'll be just as easy to make a five-reeler, because we always take about fifteen reels, anyway. Now we'll cut to five instead of two."

Buster thinks "One Week" his best comedy, but he admits he had hoped to make "The Playhouse" his best. In that clever picture, he essayed a dozen or more roles. He had intended doing all of the parts, but his ego failed him at the crucial moment.

Despite the fact that he is one of the big drawing cards, often featured in the lights and billed above the longer picture of the program, Keaton has

assumed no airs, adopted no pose. He denied that he made a preparation for a picture. He denied that he planned his plots. Try as you will, you cannot convince him that he is anything more than a troupier who manages to give 'em what they like. It is useless to talk to him of psychological effects.

"It's hokum," said Buster definitely and positively. "And by draping it in different styles you disguise it and bring results each time."

According to his lights, it is simply a case of old gags in new clothing. But if this were so, there would be more Keatons. Unfortunately enough, there aren't.

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October 21, 1923

Dorothy Day

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Buster Keaton Can Smile After Business Hours

I went to interview Buster Keaton with one ambition in mind--I would make him smile just to see if he could. He can. He favored me with a broad grin, upon our introduction. Maybe he thought I was funny, but that's another story. The comedian makes a business of never smiling during his films. When he was asked why he said that he didn't consider his work any joke. He has acquired the habit of keeping his face immobile only through years of study, and it is perhaps because of this very trait that the Keaton face has become famous. At least that is one of the reasons.

It was difficult to make him say anything. I never saw anybody so unwilling to talk. This is a characteristic which Buster must find very helpful on lost of occasions. Anyway, being a star of the silent drama seems to have its effect. Well, after we sat quite still for a few moments I decided to ask him how he liked the baseball games. He came on for the especial purpose of viewing the world series and so it was not amiss to

imagine that he would want to say something about it.

"Oh, the games," said Mr. Keaton, "they were fine."

"Were you satisfied with the outcome of them?" said I.

"Sure," replied Buster. "I bet on the Yanks."

"Did you win much?"

"Not much; a couple of dinners and the tickets."

That seemed to conclude the conversation so far as he was concerned.

"When are you going back to Los Angeles?" I ventured next.

I knew all the time that he was leaving in the afternoon of the same day, but it made something to say.

"This afternoon," and Buster considered that settled.

"You will be glad to get back, I suppose."

"Yes." It seemed that he agreed with me on that subject too.

Buster fumbled for his watch, and I thought he was about to commit the deadly sin of looking at it, but he had no such idea in mind. Attached to the other end of the watch chain was a little platinum locket. Silently he opened it and presented it to me.

A cherubic face smiled out at me. It was Buster Keaton, Jr. "Does he look like you?" I ventured.

"Exactly," Buster assured me. It was the first display of enthusiasm.

"I thought so," said I as I handed him back the locket, assuring him it was the loveliest picture of a child I had ever seen.

That must have made a hit with Buster, for right away he began to take more of an interest in the interview.

The next time I interview anybody who seems to not care much about it I am going to ask straight away if he happens to have a picture of his baby with him. If he has I'll know what to do, and if he hasn't I'm going to consider myself out of luck.

Mr. Keaton then proceeded to divulge some secret about the making of comedy pictures. It seems they have no script at all. "You could write the whole plot on a post card," said he, "we do the rest." So far as I could understand the making of comedies is very much like the juvenile sport of

"playin' theatre." You don't know just what you'll do until you do it.

"The director, a couple of scenario writers and I sit around and discuss a scene. That is how the gags are made," said Mr. Keaton. "Then we shoot the scene. Lots of things develop during the actual taking of the picture which we hadn't thought out at all."

Having learned all there seemed to be to learn about the simple process of making comedies I asked him if he ever thought of confining his activities to the more serious drama. Did he have any secret longing to play Hamlet or Macbeth?

Buster hadn't. He looked disapprovingly at me for the mere suggestion of such a thing. I don't believe he cares much about the two gentlemen in question.

"I would like to play 'Merton of the Movies' thought," he said. Then somebody said something which struck Buster as humorous and he smiled a broader smile than I thought him capable of.

"How," said I, "do you keep from laughing during the filming of your pictures, or don't you believe in laughing at your own jokes?"

"It is hard sometimes," he confided. "I particularly remember one time in Philadelphia, where I went to attend the opening of one of the Loew theatres. We paraded up and down the streets in automobiles and I had on my serious expression. Lots of little kids yelled, 'Why don't yer give us a smile. Somebody tickle him and make him laugh,' and so on, and it was hard that time not to burst right out laughing."

Then we came back to the subject of Buster, Jr., again. He appeared in Buster, Sr.'s last picture, "Hospitality." It was his debut as a screen actor. Incidentally, father and mother Keaton appeared in the same picture with son Buster, and Natalie was in it, too, making three generations of Keatons in the one offering.

"He's a great kid," said Buster, Sr., proudly. "And there's a vacant space in the other side of the locket, you may have noticed. I'm reserving that."

"Well, he sure is a lovely kid," I reiterated, first because I really

meant it and secondly because the subject of the baby seemed to be a common bond of interest.

"He sure is," Buster agreed, and it was plain to be seen there was no argument there.

"Well," I chirped, "know any more jokes?"

It was inopportune and Buster noticed it. He actually laughed, but loud this time. "What do you think of that; I show her the baby's picture and she asks me do I know any more jokes."

Evidently I had made an unforeseen nifty, but we laughed that off and everything was fine.

Keaton left for Los Angeles last week and expects to begin work on a new picture soon. What it will be about he hasn't an idea, but between you and me and the rest of the world I'll bet it will be funny.

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Seven

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the seventh day after Taylor's body was discovered.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922
Walter Anthony
SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

Los Angeles--There is genuine sympathy here for Mabel Normand, whose connection with the William Desmond Taylor murder has brought her a deal of irreparable damage through undesirable publicity. That the diminutive actress heroine of "Mickey" and sole excuse for "Molly O," had anything to do directly or indirectly with the death of Taylor is unthinkable; the police are not even

investigating that possibility, but that she visited Taylor just before his death and was the last person, probably, to converse with him, is the sum of her offense out of which millions of damaging words are spun.

The discovery of a pink nightgown in the apartments of Taylor is announced. Its "identity" is stated in the papers to have been established, and the excited reader is assured that the police know it to be the garment and property of a "certain nationally-known film star." The public draws its own conclusions, encouraged into error by the fact that the article is published next to one in which Miss Normand is interviewed. The assumption follows erroneously, that the "nightie" is Miss Normand's.

These veiled accounts, printed intimations and curiosity-begetting rumors are vicious in their implications and, if they be not stopped, will possibly damage Miss Normand's professional career to an extent that can hardly be estimated.

That police have under rigid investigation a "certain nationally-known film star" is certain, and I know the young lady's name; but nothing has been definitely scored against her as yet. The newspaper writers in honestly seeking to protect her against a cruelly false accusation have unwittingly permitted the spirit and nature of their stories to cast a hideous aspersion on an actress whose only offense was a deep friendliness for the director and an inability, apparently, to come to a proper appraisal of the character of a man who abandoned his wife and his baby many years ago.

The pitiful fact concerning Miss Normand's desperately unfortunate position is that readers of the daily press, sure of their own genius for solving mystery, place their damnable suspicions on her and will reluctantly admit--that being the quality of all detective minds--they were wrong.

Meanwhile, at this writing, the detective force of Los Angeles is working on the theory that the undue intimacy which they declare existed between Taylor and "a certain nationally known film star" was the immediate cause of the murder. That there was this intimacy has been positively asserted by men engaged in the tragic task of finding the author of the tragedy.

Of course, the film-folk are busy trying to minimize the effect the story

may exert on the industry, and some are seeking, unwisely, I think, to persist in assertions of the innocence and beauty of the character of the murdered man, ignoring the very obvious fact that men of high probity do not run away and abandon without a word a wife and daughter.

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February 8, 1922

CHICAGO JOURNAL

Los Angeles--...In Miss Minter's contract--already famed for its clause that she must not marry--is another unusual clause which states that every film must be passed upon by her mother. Wherein, say further those who here claim to know, was the reason that in the latest Realart release in which Miss Minter stars, an adaption of "Tillie, the Mennonite Maid," she is once more dressed in the softer garb of girlhood.

"Mary Minter's mother always held she was 'too young for love'," one actress commented here today. "She brought her up to be very exclusive. She was reported once last year to be engaged to Tom Dixon of New York. She wore his ring, but nothing ever came of it. Mary, to the rest of us, has always been 'holier than thou.'"

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February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Mary Miles Minter is Near Break-Down

Mary Miles Minter today was closely guarded by private detectives whom she had stationed at her beautiful Spanish casita, 2039 North Hobart boulevard, to keep away reporters and the merely curious. Miss Minter, according to reports from her house, is in a very nervous condition and has not been able to sleep for two nights. She was in conference with her mother,

several friends and her attorney, John R. Mott. Expensive limousines lined the street for half a block. All correspondents who attempted to gain admission were turned back by the guards.

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February 8, 1922
LOS ANGELES RECORD

...A fight to save the professional reputation of Mary Miles Minter, movie star, whose name has been dragged into the William D. Taylor murder mystery, was started today by her friends here.

Hollywood's financiers, dealt a severe blow in the Arbuckle case, are resolved that no more screen prestige in which thousands of dollars have been invested shall be lost.

Magnates determined to preserve Miss Minter's screen popularity met with attorneys at her home.

Behind drawn curtains while private detectives stood guard to keep outsiders away the conference continued during the night and up until and early hour this morning...

The son of a multi-millionaire eastern family may be arrested in connection with the murder of Taylor within the next day or two.

His arrest will occur if county detectives can find a few necessary bits of corroborative evidence to support the theory already partly borne out by recent discoveries.

The man who is suspected of knowing something about the mysterious assassination of the prominent picture director is now in Los Angeles under close surveillance.

He came to this city, according to report, because of his admiration of a certain prominent woman movie star, whose name is among those mentioned as friends of the dead director.

He was accredited by mutual acquaintances with being insanely jealous of the girl, although she, it appears, had never given him very much

encouragement. Matrimony was his object, it is believed.

Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz confirmed the supposition that the sheriff's office is working on the theory that the murder was committed by some admirer of an actress and not by Edward F. Sands, former secretary of Taylor.

Captain David L. Adams, head of the police detective squad that is trying to solve the murder, still hold firmly to the theory that with the capture of Sands the murder will be explained. Police are concentrating on the task of finding the secretary...

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February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

A conspiracy of silence intended to thwart police investigation; the assurance of immunity for Edward F. Sands on a felony charge; the asserted career of the alleged slayer; entry of the federal government into the probe; the grilling of witnesses and the widespread probing of new and secret evidence featured developments in the mystery surrounding the slaying of William D. Taylor today...

Sands, the man whom Police Captain David L. Adams is confident is responsible for the slaying of Taylor, today invited the fugitive to communicate with police headquarters and eliminate himself from the case if he is not guilty.

"Sands will not be prosecuted on the grand larceny charge now pending against him," Captain Adams said. "He can't be. The complaining witness in that case--Taylor--is dead. That case could never come to trial.

"If Sands is innocent, all he has to do is to notify me and prove his whereabouts on the night of the murder. If he can explain his movements successfully he will be released. We don't want him..."

That there is an apparent plot afoot to prevent the true facts in the case from coming to light was corroborated today by Undersheriff Eugene

Biscailuz.

"To date practically every source of possible information has proved a blank wall as far as the investigation is concerned," he said. "Plenty of red-hot information has been obtained by this office, but it has been wormed and ferreted out from various sources where it should have been forthcoming from persons who know.

"There is to be no further patience shown these persons who have been extended every courtesy and given every opportunity to tell what they know. Those who have facts which should be known to this office must 'come clean.' Sheriff Traeger will brook no more of these petty delays and unwillingness on the part of those who apparently have reached a unanimous decision to thwart the efforts of officers of the law interested in seeing that justice be done."...

It seemed today that activities for the time being would center at county headquarters where, under the personal direction of Sheriff William I. Traeger, Deputies Al Manning and Harvey Bell are working night and day in their efforts to bring the slayer to justice.

Three men have been under suspicion by these officers for the past two days. One of them may be arrested today. It was definitely stated by the sheriff's office that steps would be taken to charge one of them with complicity, at least, in the crime.

This assertion dovetails with intimation that Taylor was the victim of a sinister plot in which many persons well known to the public are more or less involved. It is whispered that before the investigation is concluded a startling list of names will be bandied about as co-conspirators in the slaying of the noted director.

Shortly after 9 o'clock deputies were dispatched to look for the one of the trio said to have full knowledge of the murder and to collect further evidence relative to the asserted conspiracy...

Sand's connection with the case has proved the bone of contention between various officials working on the mystery. The police department, practically to a man, are inclined to believe him guilty of the murder.

Representatives of the sheriff's office take a diametrically opposite view. There is nothing in the evidence thus far disclosed which would connect the former secretary with the crime, they say.

But Chief Deputy District Attorney William C. Doran is of the opinion Sands is the man and as a result a formal complaint charging him with the crime may be issued today. The district attorney's office has Detective Sergeants Contreras and King working on the case since it was first opened and they are in possession of certain facts that warrant such procedure, they say.

All of the officers working on the case, however, are proceeding with "open" minds and are accepting each clue at its face value. They were also busy today searching for a new figure in the tangle--a man said to have been deeply in love with a prominent motion picture actress mentioned in connection with the case.

This man was seen in the vicinity of the Taylor home a few days prior to the murder and is said to be similar in build and general appearance to the man seen lurking about the Alvarado street residence on the night of the slaying.

The "mystery woman" interjected into the case late yesterday at the sheriff's office was also scheduled to make a second appearance today. Her identity has been closely guarded and the nature of her testimony has been withheld.

According to Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz, however, she is of the "utmost importance" to the ultimate unraveling of the mystery...

* * * * *

February 8, 1922
LONG BEACH PRESS

A new figure was drawn within the scope of investigation in the William Desmond Taylor murder case today, when operatives of the district attorney's office made efforts to question one of the biggest independent figures in the motion picture business, it was learned by United Press.

This man, recently divorced, was said to have been madly in love with an actress who apparently held Taylor in higher esteem than she did the man now being questioned.

The man under surveillance was the only one of the half dozen biggest men in the picture game in Hollywood who did not attend Mr. Taylor's funeral yesterday, investigators said.

He is reported to have proposed marriage on numerous occasions to the actress whose silken nightgown police detectives assert they found in Taylor's home shortly after he was shot.

Still another investigation agency was interesting itself today in the son of a multi-millionaire eastern family. This young man has also been known in Hollywood for some time as an ardent admirer of the actress who is today the nucleus of the Taylor murder investigation.

"We are looking today for a few necessary bits of corroborative evidence to support the theory already partly borne out by recent discoveries," one detective said.

"Someone is going to be arrested--and suddenly--for the Taylor murder," Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz said today. "And it will not be Edward F. Sands, Taylor's missing valet.

"Mr. Taylor was killed through jealousy, and not revenge."

The police took a diametrically opposite view.

"Sands killed Taylor," said Captain D. L. Adams. "We want him."

The police hunt, Mr. Adams indicated, is being concentrated almost solely on an effort to arrest the former secretary.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922
LONG BEACH TELEGRAM

Police seeking the slayer of William Desmond Taylor, movie director, were working on the theory today that his assassin was hired to kill him. It is believed that Edward F. Sands, former valet of the director, may have been the

hired assassin. In pursuance of this theory, detectives were checking up on members of the movie colony who were acquainted with Sands...

The new theory is that the person who desired to have Taylor slain remembered the old enmity between the director and his former valet and used this, as well as money, to secure his death.

Taylor is believed to have had enemies, as well as friends, in the motion picture colony. These enemies were men as well as women, and some of the enmities sprang from the numerous love affairs he is understood to have had.

One of these enemies employed Sands to do the killing, according to the police theory...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
NEW YORK TIMES

Los Angeles--...A new theory of the murder was advanced today and received some consideration at the Sheriff's office. It is that Taylor was shot by a woman whom he was embracing and who had her arms around him. The theory is based on the position of the bullet found in his back and the fact that Taylor is thought to have had his arms raised when he was killed. Rage, because she had been scorned by the director, is the motive imputed to the woman...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
Lannie Haynes Martin
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor Home Ideal Scene for Tragedy

No more perfect stage setting for a dramatic tragedy could have been wished for by the most exacting director or stage manager than the artistic

arrangement of the house in which William D. Taylor, director and art connoisseur, met his death.

If the front wall of the house had been removed, a description of the first floor might well be taken for the preface of a one-act play.

Imagining this front wall to be a drop curtain which has just been rolled up there will appear in the extreme foreground, a little right of center, a small mahogany writing desk, over which are scattered papers, checks and letters. At the left of center stands a magnificent grand piano [sic] with an oriental covering of soft mauves and mulberry shades. At right of center a large tapestry divan of neutral tone, figured in dull mauve tints. Behind the divan a large window curtained in deep cream filet lace with aide drapes of figured chintz harmonizing in color with the mulberry velvet carpet on the floor.

Immediately behind this large living room, separated from it merely by simulated pillars, is a small dining room. The carpet is of the identical color, fabric and pattern as that which covers the living room floor; a William and Mary dining room table stands in the center and scattered through both rooms are reed and mahogany chairs, upholstered in mulberry velvet. The walls of these adjoining rooms are covered with dull gold and olive tapestry over which are hung scores of photographs, pictures of beautiful moving picture actresses and of men known internationally in the film world. Perhaps no single wall in the world held so complete a collection of famous screen beauties.

Behind the dining room is a small kitchen, complete in every detail from its white enamel sink and drain boards to its spotless refrigerator and polished range.

The front bedroom, furnished in old ivory, with a pale blue Axminster rug and white muslin curtains, was the one formerly occupied by the man who met his death at the hands of an assassin's bullet. Two large windows looked out on the wide, green court and side windows, allowing floods of light and air, gave the room an unusually well ventilated aspect. On the dresser lay numerous toilet articles, all silver mounted and handsome, showing the

aesthetic taste of a fastidious man, but all plain and substantial without any effeminate touches.

On the table lay a variety of books, fiction, history, technical volumes connected with the work of the dead man.

A blue and white blanket and a white Marseilles spread covered the bed in which the dead man was wont to sleep. This had been his home for the last three years and standing there on the threshold of this room, the most private sanctum and retreat a human being maintains for himself, one wondered what dreams of romance, wealth or glory flitted through the brain of the man now sleeping beneath six feet of earth [sic] and a blanket of roses, or what haunting fears, arising from spectres of the past, tormented that crumpled pillow? Of all the beautiful women that he knew, which face was it that floated through his dreams, and was it to hope and anticipated pleasure or to despair that he awoke in the morning?

In the bedroom at the rear stand twin beds, covered with plain white spreads. Between the two bedrooms is a white tiled bath room with a huge tub and shower and a large medicine cabinet filled with bottles of every description, household remedies and simple drugs, but showing that the former occupant suffered with a variety of ailments from eye trouble to falling hair. In this cabinet were two varieties of talcum powder, two perfume bottles with distinctly different odors, and other articles pertaining more to feminine tastes than masculine.

An air of seclusion and security one might have felt in this house, which is set well back in the court from the street and surrounded by sedate looking dwellings that would seem to frown on and forbid the presence of crime.

But from the successful manner in which the murderer has broken all threads of the clew which would implicate him in the deed, probably no more cold-blooded crime was ever planned. There at the little mahogany desk, in the immediate foreground, a trifle to the right of center, on Wednesday evening, February 1, about eight o'clock, sat William D. Taylor, probably the best known and best loved moving picture director in the West.

A bright light burned over his desk and a long evening's work lay ahead

of him. With the lights out in the kitchen and the dining room at the rear, a murderer might well have hidden in the dusky, purple shadows, and over the soft velvet carpet he could have glided in silence until he reached out and touched his victim. Who knows but what he may have muffled his revolver and shot at such close range that the speeding bullet made no perceptible report or echo, except in the startled consciousness of the man whose soul and body were rent apart in the twinkling of an eye.

And all night long, as the body of the murdered man lay on the floor, the crimson life-blood silently oozing out drop by drop, dyeing the soft carpet a deeper hue, all night long the lights burned on his desk, throwing weird gleams and shadows on the pictures of the beautiful moving picture actresses on the wall; what ghosts stalked through this silent sepulcher that night? What echoes of the fleeing murderer resounded in the streets outside?

But now, as though no breath of crime had ever stifled out a human life, the birds twitter in the eaves and over the doorway and the sun streams through the windows and flickers in dancing circles over the carpets, which show no visible reminders of the crime. Only a silence, a hush like that of wonder, seems to hold the unspoken whisper. Why? Who? Where is he now?

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Los Angeles--A conspiracy of silence calculated to defeat the efforts of police detectives and deputy sheriffs in Los Angeles who are seeking to unravel the mystery surrounding the slaying of William D. Taylor was charged today by the Sheriff's office. A number of persons having definite knowledge directly bearing upon the murder which they are withholding as part of the suppression plot, it was inferred from statements by investigators.

One woman prominently identified with the investigation is said to be in possession of information which she has thus far failed to turn in. She has adopted an attitude of uncertainty in the whole matter, it is asserted.

Detectives from the central police station were assigned orders to visit the woman and insist upon the facts in the case. Police informants declare she has been instructed by her husband to "develop" a sudden loss of memory.

Henry Peavey, valet to the murdered director, and the first one to find his body, was taken to the Hall of Justice for his first "real" grilling. Peavey, it is generally stated by all officers connected with the case, is "in on the know" as far as important angles previous to the death of Taylor are concerned and they assert he has thus far given only a minimum of information...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mabel Normand Letters Found in Death House

Mabel Normand's missing letters to William Desmond Taylor, slain film director, have been found. A dainty handkerchief with the initials "M.M.M." in a corner--apparently a keepsake of Mr. Taylor--also has been recovered.

The letters, about which an investigation has been conducted for several days, were written by the famous screen actress during her friendship with the noted director, who had directed such stars as Mary Miles Minter, Mary Pickford, Betty Compson and others.

Miss Normand has attempted to recover these letters, which she stated were in the possession of Mr. Taylor before his murder a week ago Wednesday night shortly after Miss Normand left his home. The officers have made every effort to find them.

Yesterday the police search was rewarded when a packet of letters, admittedly written by Miss Normand, was found in a boot in Mr. Taylor's closet. The find was made during a search of the place by Captain of Detectives Adams and his aides, Detective Sergeants Cahill, Herman Cline, Cato and Murphy.

Charles Eyton, manager of the Famous Players-Lasky studio, to whom Mr. Taylor was under a two-year contract, said last night that he was at the house when the letters were found, but was not present in the upstairs room when the actual discovery was made.

E. C. Jessurund [sic], proprietor of the apartment court in which Mr. Taylor lived, was present, Mr. Eyton said. The letters comprised a large packet and from statements made by Chief Dep. Dist. Atty. Doran yesterday it was understood the District Attorney's office came into possession of them.

Miss Normand was an intimate friend of Mr. Taylor and during times when she was in New York and he was here she wrote to him, she said, in explaining her desire to get the letters. She stated she wished to have them because she feared that some of the terms used in them might be misconstrued, although she and Mr. Taylor understood there was no serious love affair.

The handkerchief, which was kept among other personal effects of Mr. Taylor, was found by Henry Peavey, negro houseman, who found his employer's body last Thursday morning.

"Here's the handkerchief all you boys have been bothering about," Peavey says he announced.

It was taken from him by the detectives and placed with the other personal effects that may have a bearing on the solution of the crime.

From statements Peavey had previously made about seeing the handkerchief many weeks before the murder, however, it is believed, it has no direct bearing on the problem of who killed Mr. Taylor.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Los Angeles--...Members of the sheriff's office made an outright declaration that they were being hindered in the Taylor investigation by an "iron-clad conspiracy between police and members of the film colony," with regard to giving information concerning Taylor...

...Another clew that has disappeared is a handkerchief initialed "S." which the police did not believe was the property of Edward F. Sands, former butler, now sought in connection with the case.

The police said they believed this handkerchief belonged to a motion picture producer and they wanted it so they would have something tangible with which to confront him as a basis for interrogation...

The police announced that they proposed to limit the news given out by them in future.

"The newspapers have been publishing everything and anything and they will get nothing further from me in this case until I get something worth while," said Capt. David L. Adams, who is in charge of the investigation. "I know nothing about any pink nightgown or any letters returned to actresses. I have several letters, four or five, which the newspapers have not seen and which they will not see. They are from Taylor's mother and daughter and others and are not connected with the case."...

It was reported that more information had been given to the police to the effect a man in love with a screen actress, who did not return his love but who was believed to have affection for Mr. Taylor, had been seen near the Taylor residence before the murder...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

...An asserted love cult, an organization of mysterious ways and membership, yesterday was reported to attaches of the District Attorney's office, and is under investigation now. Mr. Taylor is declared to have been on intimate terms with the members, if, indeed, he was not one of the cult's followers.

A touch of oriental mysticism was included in the report given to the investigators...

...Mr. Manning turned over to the police the report from Arizona

concerning Sands. The message from Tucson, reads as follows:

"Walter Peterson, on way to Imperial, Cal., care of H. H. Peterson, Imperial, feels certain he met Edward F. Sands at Lowell, Ariz., February 4 and 5. Description same as Los Angeles newspapers of February 7, also wore dark suit with light pin stripe, plain yellow shirt; brown shoes; soft brown hat. Sands told him he was a deserter from the British navy, and was machine-gun man for Pancho Villa. Had been in New York, British Columbia, Alaska, Los Angeles and Hollywood.

(Signed) "B. F. Daniels

"Sheriff"

...A final search of the Taylor home, conducted yesterday by Detectives Cline, Cato and Cahill while Public Administrator Bryson was removing the possessions from the apartment disclosed a bank-book belonging to Sands. This book, showing he had made deposits in a Los Angeles bank, was found behind a book case.

A business card, apparently dropped in the house, also was found. A check on the person whose name appeared thereon is being made although it was regarded as probable that the card had been there some time before Mr. Taylor was shot to death.

Undersheriff Biscailuz late in the day admitted the Sheriff's office is working hard on three "leads" tending to connect prominent film people with the slaying. The Sheriff's office holds little credence in the theory that Sands committed the crime.

Information in the hands of the police detectives, however, indicate that Sands was near the scene of the crime about the time of the shooting, which is officially believed to have been about 7:50 or 7:55 p.m. a week ago yesterday. He also has been reported from reliable sources to have been in Los Angeles both before and after that day.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles--...Mrs. William McBurney, wife of a Los Angeles real estate man, who resides at the Westbrook Apartments, 310 South Alvarado street, a few doors from the Taylor home, declared that she and her husband saw the lurking figure of this man hidden in the shadows of the heavy foliage that surrounds the Alvarado Hotel, two blocks south of the scene of the murder.

According to Mrs. McBurney, he was still in that vicinity as late as 9:45 o'clock on the evening Taylor was shot.

"My husband and I were returning from the theater shortly before 10 o'clock," said Mrs. McBurney today. "On passing the place we noticed the man standing under the trees at Alvarado near West Sixth, directly in front of the car stop.

"I particularly noticed him on account of the fact that he wore no overcoat, although the night was chilly. He wore a dark gray muffler and a cap. He did not take the car, although one passed while we had him in view, and we remarked at that time that his actions were suspicious."...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles--...The more the case is delved into the more it appears that Taylor, the "man's man," was also a woman's man. At least four women figured in his life, two of them on terms of romance as ardent as any ever conceived.

Two of the women figured in his life, but it seems they were passing fancies, did not enter deeply into heart interest.

The case has practically resolved itself into this, according to some of the investigators:

Which one of the women is bound in the scarlet skein of the mystery?

Now it is not assumed that either of these women was an accomplice in the crime or knows who killed the film director whom they both loved passionately.

But it is felt that one of them, if she would, could sit down with an

intelligent investigator and give him facts which would lead him with unmistakable accuracy to the assassin.

It is believed that both of them are revealing only half truths because the complete disclosure might affect their professional interests...

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Mr. Doran is said to be interested in the report that Taylor's body had been carefully laid out. This statement comes from F. Parsons, a member of the police flying squadron, who, with Detective Zeigler, was the first to reach the scene of the crime.

The director, says Parsons, was not sprawled on the floor, as one would have expected, considering the apparent physical facts of the slaying, but was lying with feet together and hands at sides as though some person had very carefully arranged his body.

Would a man like Sands have taken this trouble? Would a man whose jealousy had turned into hate and hate flared forth in an act of murder have been concerned how the victim appeared in death?

Rather, ask the police, does not the patient care with which this funereal task was performed suggest the slayer to have been a woman who loved him?...

Captain Adams and men working under him on the case attach great importance to the bullet removed from the body of Taylor and to its peculiar value as evidence should the murderer ever be caught and brought to trial.

Firearms experts have determined that it is of a kind manufactured many years ago and have found rifling marks and a nick on one of its edges. As a result of its classification the police now have a fairly accurate idea of the character of revolver used.

It was learned yesterday that operatives of the United States Department of Justice have conducted an independent investigation and have developed

certain angles not appearing in the evidence secured by the police or sheriff's officers. One of these, it is said, relates to a woman who has not been mentioned in any of the reports thus far published. Valuable information, it is said, was secured from this woman.

February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Ohioan Doubts That Sands is His Son

Marion, O.--Disbelief that his son, Edward Fitzgerald Snyder, could be the man known as Edward Sands and sought in connection with the murder of William D. Taylor, motion-picture director at Los Angeles, Cal., was expressed by Murray T. Snyder, manager of a local telegraph office tonight. While he did not know his present location, Mr. Snyder said he presumed his son was alive, since he had received a telegram from him in Cleveland about three months ago. Mr. Snyder said he did not know whether the son had been in California in several months...

February 9, 1922
Edward Doherty
NEW YORK NEWS
ARKANSAS GAZETTE

Los Angeles--...Some of the detectives even advanced the theory that Edward F. Sands, the ex-valet of the murdered man, might have been taken into the custody of some of Taylor's friends; might very possibly be held now to keep his tongue from spilling out the secrets of cinema land, from supplying the police with information as to Taylor's life, Taylor's intimates, Taylor's foes...

The theory was advanced, following the story told by Fellows, that a woman may have murdered Taylor.

The theory is that she was enraged when she saw Miss Normand come out of the house, waited nearby until the moment when the director took his fair visitor to the automobile and then slipped into the house through the open door.

They picture her running to Taylor as he entered.

They even see as though it were part of one of Taylor's photodramas, the meeting of the two--hate and scorn on the face of the woman, bitterness and malice and a deadly purpose, and on the face of the man a question, a look of anxiety perhaps, perhaps fear.

There were few words, they believe, if any. Taylor, they say, may have sat down at his desk to write her check--in the manner of the photoplay father who wants to make it worth while for the vampire to give up his only son and heir.

This woman, the police think, took it as deadly insult, and, overpowered with anger, shot him through the body and made her escape.

Or it is possible--it is a very broad theory--that the woman nestled in the arms that once had held her lovingly, pleaded for the love that had died, and finding the bitterness of defeat put her arms around him, and fired...

...The "love cult" angle was introduced into the case late in the day through the troubled conscience of a resident of Chinatown. This man through an intermediary communicated with the District Attorney's office and asked that he be given immunity in exchange for information in his possession.

He had supplied the opium for the members of this cult, all men, of which, he says, Taylor was a member. He declares the men would lie in silk kimonos, smoke the essence of the poppy flower and so commence their ritual, old as Sodom.

The Chinese asserted that the members of the cult were held together by a bond, unthinkable, unnamable, unbelievable, and that each had sworn an oath of undying affection for the others.

He believes the jealousy of one of these degenerate cultists may have

caused him to slay the movie man.

The office of District Attorney Thomas Woolwine is said to have arranged to interview the Chinaman tomorrow and to protect him so far as possible against punishment for opium smuggling.

Investigators believe he can give them many important clues as to the cult, the mysterious life Taylor led, and the operation of the drug ring that has driven many a promising actor from the screen...

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>
or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 69 -- September 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Retraction: The Drug-Addicted Scenario Writer

TAYLOROLOGY 22 presented some clippings which indicated that a drug-

addicted scenario writer was being sought for questioning in the Taylor murder. At that time, we concluded that the unnamed individual was Harry Williams. Contemporary clippings reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY 22 stated that the person was (1) a former well-known song writer from New York; (2) had been a gag and scenario writer for Chaplin and Arbuckle; (3) was a drug addict, as was his wife; (4) was a drug seller. No clippings had associated Harry Williams with drugs. However, Williams was a former New York song writer who was quite well known, having written "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree" and "Mickey", among other songs. In Hollywood, Williams had worked as a gag writer for Arbuckle and for Keystone, and he was married. So we had concluded that Williams was probably the individual referred to; it seemed unlikely that another well-known song writer would so closely fit the description. Well, we were wrong. The drug-addicted scenario writer was NOT Harry Williams.

The clipping below indicates that Vincent Bryan was the person referred to, because he was: (1) a former well-known song writer--he wrote "In My Merry Oldsmobile" among other songs; (2) he was a gag writer who wrote "Love" for Arbuckle and co-wrote a number of Chaplin's films, including "Burlesque on Carmen," "The Floorwalker," "The Vagabond," and others--he also did gag writing for Keystone and for Billy West; (3) he and his wife were both drug addicts; (4) he was convicted of selling drugs.

Many thanks to Nan Bostick for providing the following clipping and supplementary information. Thanks also to Tracy Doyle for her input and feedback on this subject.

* * * * *

July 12, 1923
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Song Writer Sent to Jail
Vincent Bryan's Losing Fight Against Drug Habit

Draws Year's Term Behind Bars

A name once familiar in every musical home, in every music store and once blazoned on the silver screen as author, director and composer, was scrawled yesterday on the blotter of a local court. It read "Vincent Bryan--one year in the City Jail."

Bryan, composer of popular songs of a decade past and author and director of many a successful film, reached the bottom step yesterday of a long descending road and turned his face to a new life, which must be viewed sadly through prison bars. His sentence was the result of a long and losing fight against the drug habit.

Arrested by Deputy Sheriffs Bell and Conly and State Inspector Peoples last Saturday in the act of selling morphine, Bryan was tried before Police Judge Crawford. He was found guilty on a drug selling charge. His wife, Leota Bryan, was convicted of possessing drugs and was sentenced to ninety days. Her sentence was suspended. Bryan's will start today.

Narcotics are to blame, Bryan says, for the wreck of his life. The promise he had of becoming rich and famous took wings when he began the use of dope. He started the habit, he told the court, in New York years ago when overwork and nervous strain had almost caused him to lose his job. For a while drugs enabled him to do more and better work. Then he and his wife became addicts, he said, though both believed that they could quit at any time.

The inevitable awakening came. They faced the grim truth and admitted they were helplessly in the grip of the drug habit. Attempt after attempt to quit failed. Fear was followed by submission and poverty stalked close behind the expensive drug.

They came to California and settled down to steady work. Bryan thought he had cured the habit. He made good as a scenario writer for Chaplin, for Lloyd and other stars and directed several pictures. But with making good again came hard work, long hours and nervous strain. The craving came back and he fell again. This time he did not break away.

All his success, his work, his ambition gave way to his craving. He lost job after job and his money was spent. So that he might obtain the drug he became a peddler, but his success in that line was short-lived. His first sale, he told Deputy Bell, was the one which led to his arrest.

Hope that he may break away from the habit in jail has given him courage. His adieu yesterday to his wife was cheerful and he promised that in another year a new chapter should be written, a chapter untainted by the specter of the "stuff."

Henry Peavey accuses Mabel Normand

In 1922, and again in 1930, Henry Peavey stated that he believed Mabel Normand killed Taylor. For his 1922 accusation, see Wallace Smith's articles in TAYLOROLOGY 22 and 23. Below is the most detailed article containing his 1930 accusation. Although the name of the actress is not mentioned in the article, Mabel Normand is certainly the person referred to, because she was admittedly with Taylor at that time on the evening of his death.

* * * * *

January 7, 1930
Frank Bartholomew
LOS ANGELES RECORD

San Francisco, Jan. 7--Henry Peavey, second missing witness in the William Desmond Taylor murder case, was found in a northern California city today by the United Press.

"I am willing to return to Los Angeles immediately and tell the grand jury all I know," the young Negro said.

"I'll tell them more than the district attorney let me tell the first

time."

"Do you know who killed Taylor?" he was asked.

"I'll tell that to the grand jury," he said, nervously. He had been awakened from a sound sleep. He arose and wrapped a dressing robe around himself.

"Did you not confide in Dr. Thomas Filben that ----- (a motion picture celebrity was named) killed Taylor?"

"Yes, I did."

"Will you repeat it to the grand jury?"

"Yes."

Dr. Filbin, who befriended Peavey, is executive secretary of the California Law Enforcement League.

The person accused by Peavey was the one named by Otis Hefner, another hitherto missing witness, in an exclusive statement to the United Press yesterday...

"I'd been working for Mr. Taylor as valet for eight months before he was killed," Peavey said. "He was my best friend. I've got his picture right here on my dresser."

The photograph took its place in a gallery of pictures of actresses, most of them in semi-nude poses.

"I went to [sic] Mr. Taylor's house about 7 o'clock in the evening that he was shot. I wanted to check out for the day.

"Before I opened the door I heard loud voices. One was a woman's. She was angry.

"I waited around for ten minutes, but the quarrel kept up. I wanted to go downtown, and I didn't know whether to open the door or not."

"Did you recognize the woman's voice?" he was asked.

"Yes. I saw her, too, for pretty soon I got tired waiting outside and opened the door to speak to Mr. Taylor."

"Who was she?"

Peavey hesitated, nervously. His glance swept the room, decorated with table runners and handwork which Peavey made himself.

"You told Dr. Filben who she was, didn't you?"

"Yes, I did."

"You named ----- ?"

He nodded his head, affirmatively.

"Was that true?"

"Yes, it was!" he cried in a high voice. "It was all true, every word of it! I'll go down to Los Angeles and tell it all to the grand jury. I'm not afraid!"

"You didn't tell this at the coroner's inquest?"

"No. They wouldn't let me. They tried to shake the story I told them before the inquest. They threatened me. I didn't change my story, because it was true, but I left out that part about the row at Mr. Taylor's house. Then I knew they would make more trouble for me, so I left Los Angeles right away."

"Who do you mean by 'they'?"

"The district attorney's office."

"You told Dr. Filbin that when the district attorney was questioning you, you said repeatedly, 'Why do you pick on me? You know who killed Taylor.' Is that right?"

"Yes, it is."

Peavey's story had to be drawn by close questioning. He volunteered little.

"At what time do you think Taylor was shot?"

"Sometime between 7:10, when I finally spoke to him and left the house, and 7:30 p.m."

"Why before 7:30?"

"His chauffeur told me afterward that he telephoned Taylor from downtown, asking any further instructions for the day, at about half-past seven, and couldn't get an answer to the phone. Then he went to Taylor's house, but it was dark [sic] and the door was locked."

"What time was it that the chauffeur went to the house?"

"I don't remember. Not very long, I guess, because he wanted to get home himself."

"What about this quarrel that was going on?"

"Well, it was just a row, that's all. The woman was doing most of the talking. She was mad."

"What have you been doing since you left Los Angeles?"

"I came up to San Francisco and went to work for the Corona Typewriter company. That's where I met Dr. Filben, in the typewriter company office. He recognized my name and identified me with the Taylor case. He was nice to me, and finally when I got to know him I told him the whole story--the part they wouldn't let me tell in Los Angeles.

"Then I came to this city and got a job as an actor. I played a part in 'White Cargo.'

"I've been around here since, and that's about all."

The Negro section of the city where Peavey was found has been keeping him under cover for several days, since Dr. Filben gave his story to the United Press in San Francisco.

A negro political leader was finally prevailed upon, after a number of blind leads had been followed, to assign a lieutenant to accompany the reporters to Peavey's home.

He was found in a two-room apartment in the rear of a home which itself faced the street. He had as a room mate a Portuguese boy, who was not present at the interview.

"Henry likes to do fancy work," the guide explained. "He's got it all over his place."

He had, and upon the various runners and doilies was an assortment of powder boxes and paints.

...He speaks in a voice surprisingly high in register for his build. He is not well educated. The manager of the theater at which he plays occasional parts informed reporters that Henry's bits in "White Cargo" had to be read to him.

"I'm innocent of any wrongdoing," Peavey assured his interviewers. "I've been working and earning an honest living and minding my own business.

"My conscience is clear and I'm not afraid of anybody. I'm willing to go

right down to Los Angeles and tell the whole thing to the grand jury.

"They made me think, at the time Mr. Taylor was killed, that if I didn't keep my mouth shut about this quarrel and get out of Los Angeles that they might accuse me of the murder. Mr. Taylor was my close friend. I'm innocent. Now I'm ready to tell them all I know."...

Testimony of Margaret Shelby Fillmore

Leslie Henry was the investment broker for Charlotte Shelby, Mary Miles Minter, and Margaret Shelby Fillmore. He stole from their investment accounts and pleaded guilty to grand theft and forgery in 1933. In an attempt to recover the stolen money, the three women subsequently sued Blyth and Company, the investment firm Leslie Henry was working for (see TAYLOROLOGY 35 and 41). Most of the testimony pertains to dry financial transactions, but the following are a few extracts from a pre-trial deposition given by Margaret Shelby Fillmore, which give a little background into the Shelby family. Thanks very much to David Downey for providing these transcripts.

* * * * *

Q. Now the Lookout Mountain place was where, just generally?

A. It was west of Sherman and east of Beverly Hills.

Q. Do you remember what time you were living there in that property?

A. Yes, Mr. Fillmore and I moved into the home on completion, in June of 1926.

Q. About how long did you live there?

A. Until I traded for the home in Beverly Hills, which was in April or May, I believe, of 1927.

...

Q. And where, during 1920?

A. In the Helen Matheson house.

Q. That was what number.

A. 56 Fremont Place

...

A. Yes, we rented--that is, my mother leased the house from Miss Matheson.

Q. Then what did you mean by saying you sold them out of house and home?

A. Because I sold the house for the owner, Miss Matheson.

Q. Oh, I see; and you received a commission for it?

A. In this way; I was quite young then; I did not receive the full commission. I was not entitled to it. But I was the one who made the contact and who made the deal. Mr. Henderson, oil man, bought it, and I received more of a compensation than I did a commission. It was understood I was to have that out in commission, or I wouldn't have introduced my client.

Q. Well, who were you working for in that?

A. For myself. I was just beginning. It was my first deal in Los Angeles.

Q. Do you remember what the amount of your commission or compensation or whatever you want to call it, was?

A. It was more of a compensation, a cut or a split commission. It was just \$2,000, but it seemed very important to me; it was my first deal.

Q. Then after the Helen Matheson house was sold, did you accompany your mother to New York for that Christmas?

A. Yes, I spent Christmas in New York.

Q. Approximately when did you return to Los Angeles?

A. A few months--the first few months in 1921.

Q. Did your mother return with you?

A. Yes.

Q. And Mary also?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where did you take up your abode then?

A. At the Ambassador Hotel.

Q. Then how long did you live at the Ambassador Hotel, approximately?

A. Why, we lived there until late spring or early summer of the same year, 1921.

Q. 1921?

A. Yes.

Q. Then from there where did you go?

A. We moved into an investment that my mother had bought, at 701 South New Hampshire.

...

Q. Now, how long, then, was Mary at this house in the Los Feliz tract, approximately?

A. Well, time is so difficult for me to tell you. We got into the house at the end of 1921, and she stayed until April or May of 1922, because she and my grandmother went to Honolulu.

Q. In April or May of 1922?

A. As I remember.

...

A. I was building a house in the Los Feliz tract, opening a new subdivision; and Mary fell in love with the little place; nothing would do but we must move over there. She made me very happy, and we went there and were there some time, and the house lay dormant, we were working on plans, my mother was, with the different contractors, taking bids. So I would say--we sold that little house in April or May of 1922; and the Casa was being rebuilt, redecorated; additions put in, in 1922; I remember we opened in 1923; it took about nine months' time.

Q. When you moved to this house in the Los Feliz tract, your mother, grandmother, Mary, and you--all four--went there?

A. Yes, and no; what I mean, we had an office--in this large house there was an office, and my mother and I kept our records, we conducted our business, in that office.

...

Q. All right; now, all I am trying to fix is the time, definitely, when you sold your house in the Los Feliz tract and started living in the Casa.

A. It would be after the sale in April or May of 1922.

Q. 1922?

A. Yes.

Q. Well, then, from May of 1922, your only residence which you and your mother had was at the Casa?

A. Yes.

Q. How long did you continue your residence there at the Casa?

A. The word "residence" is rather difficult, because it was a workshop to me.

Q. Well, how long did you stay there?

A. Why, until June of 1926.

Q. And you were living in the Casa, then, during the time that the alterations were made to turn it into an apartment?

A. Yes.

Q. And in June of 1926 your mother left Los Angeles, did she not?

A. Yes.

Q. And later on sailed, as I remember her testimony some time about the last of June or first of July, for Europe?

A. Yes.

Q. And she did not return till some time in the fall--November, I think--of 1929?

A. Yes.

Q. You made two trips to Europe during her sojourn there?

A. I did.

...

A. I sailed October 8th from Cherbourg, in 1927.

...

A. I believe I sailed in July of 1927, and not in March.

Q. After your mother left here for Europe, in 1926, did you stay at the Casa at all, yourself?

A. No; Mr. Fillmore and I went to our Lookout Mountain home.

...

Q. Did you ever discuss with Mary the fact that you were to receive a present from your mother of the profit she made on Laughlin Park?

A. Mary left home in 1922; I didn't see very much of Mary. There was hardly any discussion between us at all on any--there wasn't any that I can remember at all.

Q. Well, then, your answer would be "no?"

A. "No."

...

Q. You have no recollection of discussing with Mary your mother's intention to give you the profits from Laughlin Park, or the fact that she had given you that profit, after Mary left home and before the bonds were actually purchased for you?

A. I remember no such discussion.

Q. No such discussion?

A. No.

Q. Now, then, do you remember that the subject was afterwards discussed between you and Mary, or between Mary and her mother in your presence?

A. No.

...

A. That was after she [Mary] left home and she was under the influence of other people.

Q. What other people?

A. This Mrs. O'Neil and her daughter, Jeanie McPherson, were two of them--and other people.

Q. About how long after she left home was it before relations between you and Mary ceased to be friendly?

A. The first time it occurred to me that there could be anything but friendliness between us was when a reporter came to the house, and I saw him and said that my mother did not want to be annoyed with him.

...

Q. You were married in what time?

A. May, 1925.

Q. May of 1925?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you reside at the Casa after you were married or not?

A. Yes, I did, for a short time.

...

Q. Mrs. Fillmore, when you went abroad in 1927, and you met your mother in France, did you meet your sister Mary there?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. As soon as you arrived?

A. They were living in the same hotel.

Q. Living in the same hotel?

A. Yes.

...

Q. Now, when, do you remember, did your sister return from Europe?

MR. LEVINSON: It has already been stipulated it was in December, 1927.

...

Q. Now, I will show you Exhibit S-19 from your mother's deposition, which is a check made payable to yourself and endorsed "Margaret Shelby, per Charlotte Shelby," and ask you whether both your name and that of Charlotte Shelby is in your mother's handwriting--if you know.

A. These are both mother's signatures.

Q. Did you know that she endorsed that check?

A. What of it, Mr. Sterry?

Q. Well, I asked you a question.

A. My mother is my mother; and if she did so--

Q. I assume that she is not your father. But what I am asking you is, if you knew she endorsed this check, or if you knew whenever she desired so to do, she endorsed your checks?

A. I have no recollection whether she endorsed that check or not.

Q. Well, you knew that she was in the habit of occasionally endorsing your checks?

A. She was quite capable of taking care of my business, far more than I was, as far as money matters are concerned.

Q. Well, that is not an answer to the question.

A. I don't like your question.

Q. Well, I am sorry, but I do. I am asking you the question whether or not you knew that she had the authority from you to endorse your checks?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mrs. Fillmore, at the time you sailed for Europe in 1927 had you parted from your husband?

A. Yes.

...

Q. Now, let's see--you went to Europe, last trip, at what time?

A. March of 1929.

...

Q. Now, then, what became of the Casa? I don't mean in chain of title, which your counsel promised to hand me; but what became of the--what did you do with it?

A. It was leased for a club for young men.

Q. Do you remember whether that lease had been made before this auction sale?

A. No, I made it later.

Q. How much later?

A. Summer of 1926.

...

Q. Now, was Holbrook the lessee?

A. Yes.

Q. To whom you had made the lease?

A. No, the lease I made was to a man by the name of Little.

Q. Did he operate this club, or did that sale--

A. He went into bankruptcy; Little went into bankruptcy; and then this Holbrook--some time elapsed before Holbrook wanted to lease it.

...

Q. Do you remember the purpose?

A. Yes, it was to be the same--it was to be carried on as a club for business people.

Q. Well, all right. When was the auction determined on, if you remember, with reference to the time you actually held it?

A. Months before November, 1925; about August, I think.

Q. The auction was in November, was it?

A. Yes.

Q. Why was it auctioned, if you know?

A. I certainly know.

Q. All right.

A. My grandmother had just an allotted time; my mother's health had completely given way--she weighed less than ninety pounds; the strain of meeting the overhead was tremendous--it was just too much work, too much hurt to carry on; that Casa was a back-breaking, endless proposition. And I had married Mr. Fillmore at that time.

Q. When did your grandmother die with reference to the auction of the Casa?

A. Mama passed away December 5th.

...

Q. Without going into details, could you tell us generally whether your operation of the Casa paid or not?

A. It had not paid that year; the Gaylord hurt the house financially, when it was opened.

Q. Well, you opened it as an apartment house when?

A. 1922.

Q. 1922?

A. Yes.

Q. Had it paid any of the time?

A. Yes, it had.

...

Q. Do you remember approximately what the upkeep was, and the income from it, during the years from 1922 to the time you closed it?

A. That is rather a fluctuating thing. I couldn't answer without my records.

Q. Do you remember the number of apartments that you--

A. It wasn't quite like that; the Italian Renaissance was seven rooms; the French was five; the English was five; the bungalow was five. There was only one small apartment. It was run in a very magnificent manner--apartment hotel--and there were several three room suites.

Q. Well, how many rentable apartments--I don't know any other way of calling them, whether they were three rooms or four--how many different units did you have to rent?

A. May I think a moment? Ten.

Q. Ten?

A. Yes. Oh, no--eleven.

Q. Eleven?

A. Yes.

Q. And they comprised how many rooms?

A. From seven to five, four, three, one; there was only one of just one room.

...

Q. Do you remember substantially what you realized--I mean what your mother realized--from the auction?

A. It was a very large figure. It was over \$50,000.

...

Q. Mrs. Fillmore, during the time that this Casa was opened, who had been manager of it, yourself or your mother, or together?

A. Well, I had been.

Q. You had been?

A. Yes.

Q. And you had undertaken the work of renting it and collecting the rents, and generally supervising it, had you not?

A. I had done everything, even to think for the tenants.

Q. And that took little, or much of your time?

A. It took a great deal of time.

...

A. Well, Mr. Fillmore was at that time staying at the Jonathan Club.

Q. Well, I assume he did not continue to do that after he married you, did he?

A. During the auction, it would have been very difficult for a man as busy as he, and who kept as early hours, to remain in the Casa.

Q. I can imagine that; but I mean after your auction, he did not remain at the Jonathan Club, did he?

A. Well, we left--mother and I left for Louisiana after the auction.

Q. I see; and about how long were you gone?

A. Oh, I think a month--some weeks or a month.

Q. Then when you returned, did you or Mr. Fillmore go to Lookout Mountain, and your mother to the apartment in the Casa?

A. Our home was not completed at that time.

Q. Oh, it was not?

A. No.

Q. Then where did you go, then?

A. We camped in the Casa.

...

Q. Do you remember the amount of the mortgage your mother put on the Casa after she purchased it? I understand it was purchased subject to a mortgage.

A. Purchased subject, as I remember to a \$50,000 mortgage. I tried to sell that property...

...

A. We had lost a deal in 1925 for \$200,000 on the Casa; I held a check for \$10,000 on it--for a group of doctors like Doctor Fishbaugh, who then had large offices in the Bank of Italy Building, and there were ten other doctors, that I went around the floor with.

...

Q. Well, now, from 1926 until 1929 I assume your mother had no bank account in this country?

A. No.

...

Letter from Marjorie Berger to Mary Miles Minter

The following letter was written from Marjorie Berger to Mary Miles Minter in 1925. Many thanks to David Downey for providing us with a photocopy of the letter. The "sale" referred to is the auction of the furnishings of Casa Margarita. Our commentary on the letter will follow, below.

* * * * *

J. M. Berger
Income Tax Specialist
Conducts Business before Internal Revenue Bureau
Individual and Corporate returns prepared and audited
712-713 Bank of America Building
Telephone TUCKER 4508
Los Angeles

December 2, 1925

Miss Mary Miles Minter
36 West 59th Street
New York City, N.Y.

Mary Dear:

I am enclosing herewith clippings which might be of service to you.

Last Friday I called Mr. Fussell and also Major Tuller and told them about the sale and suggested that they have a representative there to see how much money was obtained which I thought might help you.

I attended the sale on Monday and Tuesday and managed to get a few words alone with your grandmother. This was the first time in months that I had the chance to speak with her and she wondered why I had neglected her so long. Margaret said no one could see her. She is failing very fast and I do not think she will live more than a week at the most. I understand she is in a state of coma a great deal of the time. Tuesday night she asked me to step in her room when I saw Margaret and Mrs. Shelby go out which I did and went with her to the bathroom. Her nurse, (who is a very close friend of Mrs. Shelby's), followed us in but Mrs. Miles said she wished to speak to me personally and did not want her to tell the family, which no doubt she made haste to do.

Your grandmother begged me to ask you to write to her and said she had written you letters and given them to Mrs. Shelby, Margaret or the nurse to mail. When she mentioned the fact that she had not heard from you, they told her you did not want to write to her, etc. etc., (you know better than I do just what sort of story they would tell her).

She said, "Marjorie, all the good things we have, all the luxuries we enjoy are ours only because Mary has made it possible, in fact, we owe everything to Mary, but the daughter and Margaret do not see it that way. If I could only see my baby before I die."

I said if she would write you a letter I would come and mail it myself. She said she would try to do so. She stated that Catherine, whoever she is, told her not to write as you were coming out to the coast. This, of course, was news to me. I told her that undoubtedly your letters, and the ones she had written you, were intercepted by someone. So that's that!

The auction has now been on for four days and has been conducted by A. H. Weil, auctioneer. Everything in the house has been sold, even some of the lighting fixtures on the walls. Mrs. Shelby says she has put some of the

furniture away for herself and that the auctioneer had put in a few lamps and rugs to help fill out, but she of course had saved the best.

The attendance at the sale has been very great and I understand she has made a pile of money out of this.

By the way, just a bit of "dirt" which you perhaps already know. Hugh Filmore is living at the Biltmore while Margaret is living at the house and running the auction, your mother leaning entirely upon her. From what your poor grandmother told me in private I think she is suffering severely at their hands but of course it cannot be helped at the present time.

This also might amuse you. I called at your house the other day and Margaret, of course, was at the door, greeted me with her cold handshake and when I was about to introduce her to a friend of mine, I forgot her married name, said I could not remember, and she said, "It's just as well you can't, because Shelby is all right for me." Some other people in the house said that they had not been living together for some time.

I think you remember old man Smith who used to be in Woolwine's office. Well, he is 'tending door and he said to me, "I am so sorry for Mary. That Margaret is a devil out of hell, if you know what that means. Of course, her husband does not live at the house and I am very sorry for him. Someday, Miss Berger, I would like to tell you a good deal of what I know about this."

Carl Stockdale and his brother are also living at the house. When I asked Mrs. Shelby what it all meant, she said she felt sorry for them after their mother passed away, but why doesn't she feel sorry for someone else?

Mary, I'll stick to my original version of the affair. Margaret is at the bottom of all your trouble and that is exactly what your grandmother told me.

I do not know who is guilty of all the information in the clippings but it is up to you to gather that. Anyway, dear, I wish you would try to see your grandmother before she passes on as she said she could not die happy without seeing her baby again. I have a good deal more to tell you which I cannot write you. It would indeed be heartrending if I did, so won't you please come?

With very best wishes, and trusting to see you soon,
Most sincerely,
Marjorie

* * * * *

Commentary:

The above letter is interesting for a number of reasons.

The letter presents an extremely negative characterization of Margaret Shelby, the most negative we have seen prior to her 1937 lawsuit against Charlotte Shelby. It presents a first-hand negative characterization by Marjorie Berger, and second-hand negative characterizations from Julia Miles and Jim Smith.

Another interesting item is the first direct quote we have seen by Jim Smith, who reportedly was living at Casa Margarita on the night Taylor was murdered.

It is uncertain what clippings Berger is referring to, but District Attorney Asa Keyes had recently reopened the investigation into the Taylor murder, and had taken an official statement from Charlotte Whitney, among others. Perhaps the clippings referred to the reopened investigation; or perhaps they referred to the financial assets of Charlotte Shelby, since the lawsuit between Minter and Shelby was still in progress at this time.

In any event, from the tone of the above letter, it is difficult to imagine that Shelby and Minter would reconcile a year later, yet reconcile they did.

Public Response to the Taylor Murder

It can be extremely difficult for members of the current generation to

understand the national reaction to the Taylor murder, because life was so different then.

We currently live in a world of media overload, with dozens of cable TV channels, supermarket tabloids, cinema multiplexes, and movies on video. Not in 1922. Back then, the average American read two newspapers every day, and intelligent people read more. The newspaper was for most people the sole source of news--in Los Angeles there were five daily newspapers; in New York there were 14, with each newspaper publishing several different editions every day.

A newspaper editor was interviewed in MOVING PICTURE WORLD the week prior to Taylor's death and stated: "They [newspaper readers] have only one point of contact with the movie industry. That point is the actor or actress they see upon the screen. To the fan, Wallie Reid is a personal friend, Harold Lloyd is a personal friend, Mabel Ballin is a personal friend. They have spent hours together in the intimate darkness and silence of the movie theatre. And anything that directly and personally affects Wallie Reid or Harold Lloyd or Mabel Ballin is human-interest stuff to the fan." Although the public had an intense interest in film stars, almost all information they had received in the past was tightly controlled by the studios. The information in "fan magazines" and newspapers had come primarily from studio publicity men or sympathetic interviewers, and was overwhelmingly positive. Negative news and gossip, such as we are currently exposed to daily in tabloid television shows and supermarket tabloids, was extremely rare prior to the Arbuckle and Taylor cases.

Part of the idealized public reaction toward silent film stars was due to the circumstances surrounding film viewing. Films could only be viewed in the "temple" of a film theater, and patrons had almost no control over which films and stars they could see; at most they could choose which local theater to attend. The situation today is very different due to VCR's. Those of us who love silent films can view videotapes of Chaplin, Valentino, Gish, or hundreds of other silent stars whenever we wish, a power which contemporary silent film audiences never had.

The William Desmond Taylor murder case was the very first murder case in which the total American public felt such a strong personal involvement, because the public felt they "knew" so many of the people involved, having seen them on the movie screen. Although Taylor himself was not widely known to the public, those around him were very well known: Mabel Normand--the last known person to speak with Taylor; Mary Miles Minter--whose love letters to Taylor were found and who became hysterical when notified of his death; Edna Purviance--Taylor's neighbor and one of the first to learn of his death; Douglas MacLean--Taylor's neighbor who heard the fatal shot; Antonio Moreno--who spoke with Taylor by phone less than an hour before the murder. All of them were actors and actresses very well known to the public, and very close to the vortex of the murder. Other prominent actresses were also mentioned in the press: Claire Windsor, who had dated Taylor a few days before his death; Taylor's ex-fiancee Neva Gerber; actresses he had directed, such as Mary Pickford and Betty Compson; writers of correspondence found in his home, such as Gloria Swanson and Blanche Sweet. The American public "knew" all of these people, resulting in an unprecedented compelling fascination with the case, and newspaper circulation soared.

(A similar parallel might be drawn with the O. J. Simpson case; the public's fascination with that case was primarily due to the fact that everyone felt they "knew" Simpson. But the Simpson case had just one celebrity; the Taylor murder had nearly a dozen.)

National anti-Hollywood sentiment has flared up several times during the history of the cinema, but that anti-Hollywood sentiment was never greater than in the month following the Taylor murder, due in part to the writings of Edward Doherty and Wallace Smith, which revealed drug orgies, nude parties, homosexuality, adultery, and other "immoral" aspects of Hollywood life. The Arbuckle scandal and trials had given Hollywood substantial negative publicity, and the aftermath of the Taylor murder crested it to new heights. Anti-Hollywood sentiment has historically had two branches, arguing: (1) the material presented on the screen is having a detrimental effect on national morals; (2) the stars who are acting in films are behaving in an immoral

manner in their private lives, and it is detrimental for the nation to idolize and emulate such immoral individuals. After Will Hays took office in March 1922, he was able to effectively disarm much of the the anti-Hollywood sentiment. As time passed, public morality changed, and there was less and less public reaction to the unconventional behavior of film stars.

So back in 1922, the situation was much different than it is today. In 1931, film producer Benjamin Hampton wrote A HISTORY OF THE MOVIES, in which he commented that a newspaper editor once told him "the Taylor stories sold more newspapers everywhere in America than were ever sold by any item of news, not excepting war news, before or since."

Mabel Normand and the Police Gazette

On her way to visit William Desmond Taylor on the evening of his death, Mabel Normand bought a copy of the Police Gazette. As she stated in a later interview: "...Displayed prominently [at the newsstand] was a Police Gazette, and on its front cover was a beautiful posed head of a pretty girl. Sennett had had his still-camera man making shots of me to go with the advertising for Suzanna, and we had wrangled a lot about the head poses. And there on the front cover of the Gazette was an idea for a pose. So I hopped out and bought it..." After Mabel's visit with Taylor, he walked her to her car, saw the magazine, and he teased her about her choice of reading matter.

Reporting the Taylor Murder: Day Eight

Below are some highlights of the press reports published in the eighth day

after Taylor's body was discovered.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES RECORD

BLUNDERS

Officials Muff Taylor Murder Probe Hopelessly for Week;
Will Woolwine End Police Chaos?

So many things have gone undone in the investigation of William D. Taylor's mysterious murder in the brilliantly lighted living room of his Alvarado street apartments eight days ago, that the heralded centralization of sleuthing by the district attorney's office comes as a distinct relief after a long list of official blunders.

BLUNDER NO. 1

First in the list of blunders was the summoning by detectives of a physician whose lack of thoroughness is evidenced by the fact that he pronounced the death from hemorrhage without examining the body, thus postponing for two hours knowledge that murder had been committed.

BLUNDER NO. 2

Second was the failure of the detectives to obtain the physician's name.

BLUNDER NO. 3

Third was the wanton destruction of vital evidence--fingerprints of the murderer--by either detectives or curious spectators. The chair that had evidently been carefully lifted by the murderer and placed over one leg of the dead man must have retained impressions of the criminal's finger ridges--those physical markings that never vary from childhood to death and that never are exactly duplicated in any two human beings. If fingerprints were found lacking at least the information would be obtained that the murderer had worn

gloves in careful preparation for the crime. However, this chair was handled by detectives and by perhaps scores of the curious who thronged the house, even while the murdered tenant still lay stretched on the floor. When investigators thought to examine it, the chair was in another room.

Many other objects might have yielded fingerprint evidence--the recently used liquor glasses, for instance.

BLUNDER NO. 4

Fourth was the failure of authorities to obtain an accurate and complete photographic record of the scene of the crime as it was when discovered. Official photographs of the room and house from every angle before the body was removed or the position of anything altered would do much to aid in investigation. Only the camera lens records permanently; the human retina depends upon memory to retain its impressions and memory is often faulty, especially in murder cases. As it is there is only the description of the room made by the first few persons who found the body and unofficial newspaper photographs, sketches and diagrams made hours later.

The exact way in which the carpet was rolled under one foot of the murdered motion picture director might be highly important in establishing where Mr. Taylor stood when he was shot, or whether his body was carefully arranged after he fell.

BLUNDER NO. 5

The fifth serious blunder was the failure of the police to exclude the morbid and curious from the scene of the crime. The house was made a thoroughfare and playground for members of the public whose presence was unwarranted and interfered with the proper investigation. Because of this it would be almost impossible to say whether any article found missing from William D. Taylor's effects was removed by the murderer or by one of the souvenir-seeking spectators.

BLUNDER NO. 6

The sixth blunder in the investigation of this most mysterious crime was the lack of cooperation of various offices during the first week of the work. Four city offices were working on the case, possibly at cross-hazards most of

the time. The city administrator's office was not certain that all papers were removed and in fact did not complete its work until yesterday--the seventh day. The police detective bureau, the prosecuting attorney's office and the sheriff's office have also worked on the case--all independently and without apparent cooperation. Happily an end is to be put to this condition at once.

However, the Mabel Normand letters were not discovered until yesterday, and then under circumstances indicating that they had been taken early in the investigation, examined and later surreptitiously planted so that officers could "find" them. An officer testified at the inquest that only one gun was found in the house--a Colt .32. Yesterday the officers discovered Taylor's Luger pistol, with its detachable rifle stock, which friends of the slain director had been asking about since the second day.

BLUNDER NO. 7

Seventh in the list of blunders is the inadequate way in which important witnesses were questioned and their testimony followed up. No secret was made by Taylor's chauffeur, Howard Fellows, of his return to the house about 8 o'clock of the murder night, when the telephone was unanswered, and his return of the car to the garage when the doorbell likewise was unanswered. Yet the murder was six days old before Howard Fellows was questioned by the police.

BLUNDER NO. 8

Eighth and perhaps most reprehensible in the series of blunders, is the fact that detectives recognized early in the investigation that information was being withheld, and took no steps to force witnesses to disclose all facts in their possession. At least one witness refused, point-blank, to answer the questions of detectives--not reporters--working on the case. And got away with it.

In view of these facts, and if in spite of them the Los Angeles authorities do not run to earth the assassin of William D. Taylor, the scandal will be known to the entire nation. For the United States has its eyes on this mysterious murder case in which the "best loved man of the motion picture community" was coldly murdered from behind.

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

...Bryson said that an investigation of Taylor's checks running back through several years had just been completed by a federal government employee connected with the income tax department and that there were no missing checks.

The complete tally of checks with the stubs indicates that no effort was made by Taylor's murderer to suppress evidence of blackmailing activities, according to Public Administrator Bryson

Bryson also said that the check probe showed that Taylor had not spent a dollar for insurance.

Efforts to interview Mack Sennett, moving picture producer and employer of Mabel Normand, to ascertain his theory on whether Mabel Normand's visit had anything to do with precipitating the crime, failed Thursday.

"Mr. Sennett has been confined to his bed for the past two weeks with a severe cold," his Japanese servant told a Record reporter late Thursday at the Sennett residence, 141 Menlo street.

The Japanese servant took the reporter's card inside the house. A moment later another servant returned with profuse apologies, saying that Sennett had such a sore throat that he could not talk. He said his employer had been ill and confined to his bed for two weeks.

Major Thomas A. Osborne, British consul, with offices in the Loew State Theater building, was momentarily expecting a telegram from Judge Frank G. Schrenkheisen, New Rochelle, New York, personal representative of Ethel Daisy Tanner, daughter of the murdered man, it was said Thursday.

British consulates in the United States are working independently to solve the murder mystery, Attorney B. Rey Schauer, counsel for the local consulate, said.

Five persons had been examined late Thursday by District Attorney Thomas

Lee Woolwine, who took over the direction of the investigation just before noon...

Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz announced Thursday that further questioning of Mrs. Douglas MacLean Wednesday night resulted in clearing her of the implication that she was holding something back in order to protect the motion picture industry from scandal. He said that Mrs. MacLean convinced him she was telling all she knew about seeing a man on the Taylor porch just after the murder.

There are others in the movie colony who are not so frank, Biscailuz hinted...

A literary lover, who, with books, suggested things a less adroit man would bluntly speak.

This analysis of the character of Taylor forms a basis for the murder theory upon which one group of investigators are now working...The county detectives who are following this new trail hold that Taylor was not entirely indifferent to women. He was, however, what might be called choicy--a connoisseur.

According to their theory, when the fancy of the eminent picture director became fixed on a certain woman he made her the present of a book. It was a book on some subject--not too intimate--that would easily give rise to comment and discussion between the donor and the recipient.

This book was followed by another, more intimate in character, which suggested some subjects not hitherto discussed between them. This book suggested another, and so on.

By this time he would have thoroughly established himself with the woman...

W. C. Doran, chief aide to District Attorney Woolwine, who is now in command of the united forces of investigators, announced Thursday that private interests would be disregarded in the effort to capture Taylor's slayer.

The film folk who might have any knowledge bearing upon the past of Taylor will be rigidly questioned, according to Doran's statement.

Among the movie characters who are expected to go on the grill there are

two outstanding figures, both men, both producers of world-wide reputation, both supposed to be admirers of a celebrated film actress who was a close friend of the murdered man.

Both men will be asked to account for their whereabouts on the night of the murder. One is supposed to have been confined to his home by illness. The whereabouts of the other has not been suggested.

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

It was a lonely little Mary Miles Minter who described William D. Taylor, the murdered motion picture director.

With one satin-slippered foot doubled under her, and her white hands linked about her other knee as she sat on the huge divan in her home the little blonde star said:

"He was so dignified--so austere--so wonderful!

"Everyone loved dear Old Billy Taylor.

"He was always good to everyone.

"I was always happy when I was out with him--which, unfortunately, wasn't very often." The blue eyes of lonely Mary Miles Minter grew moist.

"It wasn't me only that he was good to--he treated everyone that way.

"He didn't have an enemy in the world--I am sure of that. He could only be compared with God--he was so good!

"Before we went to Europe," said the girlish moving picture star, "I saw a great deal of Mr. Taylor.

"But--after that"--her voice trailed off in silence.

Again she spoke: "After that I couldn't get him to go anywhere much. He was so interested in his work. He would bury himself in his apartment for days--yes, weeks at a stretch, when he was working on a new picture.

"I don't believe he ever had a wife. He never told me he had. And our acquaintance was such that I am sure he wouldn't deceive me--no, he wouldn't.

"I cannot believe Mr. Taylor is dead. I pinch myself to wake up--I feel that I am dreaming.

"Oh, that I could wake up and know that I had a horrible nightmare--how happy I would be!"

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February 9, 1922

DALLAS TIMES-HERALD

Believes Actor with "Grudge" Killed Taylor

"A motion picture director can break as well as make an actor, and I believe William Desmond Taylor was killed by some actor or actress whom he recently refused to place in a production," Elzier La Maie, motion picture director and instructor in motion picture acting, said Wednesday.

Mr. La Maie has recently come to Dallas from the Pacific coast, where he directed motion pictures for a number of years.

"I knew Mr. Taylor very well," said Mr. La Maie, "and regarded him very highly. He was a splendid director, and was well liked by everybody who knew him. He was regarded as a gentleman always.

"Many directors have incurred the enmity and hatred of actors whom they refused to cast in certain productions, or by actors who believed the directors were trying to break them or make them unpopular with the public. It is my belief that some one harboring such a grudge is responsible for Taylor's death."

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February 9, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

Bribes Offered to Shield Film Slayer

Los Angeles--Police have been bribed, witnesses silenced, evidence suppressed, in a gigantic plot engineered from behind the scenes in filmland to defeat the ends of justice in the Taylor mystery--these sensational charges were under investigation today by District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine, hurriedly summoned from his vacation...

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February 9, 1922
NEW YORK JOURNAL

Los Angeles--...One reporter had the audacity to ask: "Was Taylor killed in a film war between big film interests by a hired assassin?"

When the question was put to leading film men they ridiculed it. Their attention was called to a story which appeared last week stating that Will Hays, the Postmaster-General, employed to assume a dominant position in the film world, had said that he planned to move the Hollywood colony to New York. The unusual manner in which the story appeared created an uproar at the time. There was no preliminary report, as usual to such stories, that Hays did plan to move the colony but a denial that he had such a plan in mind.

Many Los Angeleans, zealously guarding against any attempt to remove the colony openly charge that Taylor's murder was for no other purpose than to create a scandal to facilitate the removal of the film interests to the East. They say that it is another step in line with the Arbuckle case, and that not even murder would be too diabolical in the eyes of the enemies of Los Angeles to transfer, if necessary, the colony elsewhere.

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February 9, 1922
DENVER POST

Los Angeles--...A business representative of Miss Normand's volunteered the information that the police had ordered Miss Normand not to talk to

reporters.

"If they want her to talk they said they would come out and talk to her themselves," said the secretary.

To reporters Miss Normand and Sennett were virtually prisoners so far as interviews were concerned. The condition is without precedence in the Hollywood film colony. In the past almost any reporter could talk to any film star of any magnitude at any time until the new order left reporters wondering what had transpired to restrain the exuberant Mabel Normand, "the clown girl of the screen," from talking as freely and as much as she desired. If there is anything that the comedienne loves it is an exchange of repartee. Interviewers delight to talk to her, not so much to get a story as to enjoy one of her "gabfests," as she calls them. Possessing a quaint and piquant wit she can quicken a dull party to life almost spontaneously.

But Wednesday the spirit was dead or suppressed, and reporters seeking to penetrate the mystery surrounding Taylor's death found themselves confronted with an angle that baffled even their imagination. Turning to their old friends, the police, they found the same reserve that the film colony has adopted. Asked why and how and when and where, the police answer was epitomized by one detective:

"We don't know anything. The newspapers are doing all the work on this case. Why bother us with questions?"...

...Wednesday night Captain of Detectives David Adams, who is in charge of the case, denied in an interview with Universal Service that he had issued instructions to anyone not to talk.

"I do not care who talks," said Captain Adams. "I have not told Miss Normand nor Mr. Sennett not to talk. I wish they would talk. I wish everybody who ever knew Taylor or anybody connected with him would talk. Then we might get somewhere and get something. I have not ordered them not to talk, but I am keeping tab on all of them. I intend to do so until this case is cleared up."

Then Captain Adams explained that he had ordered Peavey, the Negro chauffeur, not to leave town. Peavey is almost without funds and received an

offer to go to San Francisco to work with a former employer. He asked permission to leave Los Angeles to accept the new position, but Captain Adams denied it and ordered him to report to him every morning at 10 o'clock.

"I do not believe that Peavey had anything to do with the crime, but I want him here," said Captain Adams. "There was an unusual relation existing between Peavey and Taylor. I do not know just what it was but I want Peavey where I can get at him in case anything comes up that will help me learn what that relationship was."

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February 9, 1922
NEW ORLEANS ITEM

Los Angeles--The hand of Oriental mysticism, weird philosophies of the Far East, and strange teachings in the realms of the psychic and supernatural, came into the investigation of the William Desmond Taylor murder case today.

District Attorney Woolwine let it become known that his new investigation of Taylor's death will cover an alleged "cult" which seemed to steep itself in the mysticism of the Orient and apply this mysticism to the relations between its members.

Taylor was declared to have been intimate with members of this little circle of "love" mystics which centered in Los Angeles.

Its teachings, according to investigators, drove members to the verge of fanaticism and in this fanaticism, they thought, there might be found a solution for the mystery surrounding Taylor's murder.

Who were members of this cult, just what its teachings were, and what were Taylor's relations with it and its members--if he had any such relations --are questions the district attorney wants answered.

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February 9, 1922

Says Pictures Do Not Resemble Snyder

"There is absolutely no resemblance between that man and my son," was the statement today of Murray T. Snyder. Mr. Snyder's statement put to rout the theory that Edward Sands, missing secretary-valet wanted in connection with the murder of William D. Taylor, Los Angeles movie director, might be Edward Fitzgerald Snyder, his son. Mr. Snyder made the statement after a careful examination of several newspaper photographs of the murdered man's missing valet.

"There isn't the slightest resemblance between this man and my son," Mr. Snyder declared. "Furthermore the navy descriptions do not tally with the true description of my boy. The navy lists the man known by that name as having blue eyes. My son, as well as all the other members of my family, has brown eyes. I am positive he is not the one wanted in connection with the Los Angeles murder mystery."

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

...Mabel Normand, slated as one of the chief witnesses today, already has made a statement for use by the district attorney's office. This statement, relative to her letters which mysteriously disappeared for seven days, corroborates her previous assertions regarding them. Her testimony in this regard reads in part:

"I went to Mr. Taylor's home on Wednesday evening (just previous to the slaying of the director) to get back the letters I had written to him. He said, 'I mailed them back to you yesterday.' I replied that they had not yet arrived and then he said, 'I think Eyton or Garbutt have them.' Then I told him that I did not care if the world saw them except that it might be embarrassing to both of us because they might be misunderstood."

Miss Normand also added that her physical condition was such at the time of her asserted conversation with Taylor that she could not remember much of his actual conversation with her. She was on the verge of a nervous breakdown at that time, she said...

[The above material is considered to be totally incorrect and fabricated by the press.]

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February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

...it was said that a prominent film man, acting in executive capacity at one of the larger studios, would be called to tell what he knows of the strange disappearance of the Normand letters.

The missives, according to the star herself, were in Taylor's possession at the time of his death. They had dropped from sight when the murder was discovered. Then, just seven days later, they came to light hidden in one of Taylor's riding boots.

It is possible, investigators conclude, that the packet was taken by the man mentioned, "edited," and some of the letters removed. The alleged "merely friendly" ones were then returned according to this theory.

Miss Normand had previously stated that there was nothing serious between Taylor and herself, but that some of the letters contained endearing terms...

...At the sheriff's office practically every investigator scoffs at the Sands theory. The attempted fixing of responsibility on the former secretary, is a "frame-up," it is charged, and the outgrowth of the "conspiracy of silence" which, it is asserted, has been planned by certain important personages in the motion picture industry.

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

...Rumors that the district attorney's office has undertaken an investigation of reports that thousands of dollars had been spent by motion picture interests to quiet the investigation of Taylor's death were vigorously denied today. Doran stated that police detectives and others have been in close touch with the district attorney's office and that no attempts to block the investigation had been encountered by him as yet.

The fact that the district attorney's office has taken charge of the investigation is said to please motion picture officials vitally interested in the case. With Woolwine and Doran in charge the investigation will proceed systematically without unwarranted suspicion being directed against innocent parties.

It was considered probable today that Woolwine will withdraw from the trial of Mrs. Madalynne Obenchain, charged with the murder of J. Belton Kennedy, to take direct and personal charge of the investigation of the Taylor case. Woolwine intended entering the trial of Mrs. Obenchain after the selection of the jury had been completed...

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February 9, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Los Angeles--The district attorney's offices and other agencies investigating the William D. Taylor murder mystery today were abuzz with excitement over a persistent rumor that the "murder gun" would be in custody in a few hours.

Detectives were said to be looking for a milkman who found a revolver near Taylor's bungalow early Thursday morning. The body had not been found at the time, it was said.

The milk deliveryman took the gun home with him, intending to turn it in at police headquarters but later, when he heard of the murder, decided to "forget about it" for fear of being implicated, according to reports. Deputy

District Attorney Doran admitted that he had heard the rumor but denied that a report had been made to him by his detectives who were credited with picking up the clew.

"If anyone has a real lead on this gun, it is not my men, despite these stories," Doran insisted.

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February 9, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

Los Angeles--Hollywood's thousand and one nights of fevered depravity, the dance of death in which whirl actors and actresses closest to the hearts of the great American film public, today came under the shrewd, unsentimental eye of the government secret service.

Called in to aid the Los Angeles authorities in solving the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor, star director and eccentric lover of many women, the federal operatives found themselves on a dizzy, downward trail--the trail down which the screen puppets are posturing to their fate.

Before them passed the amazing spectacle of these worshipped idols of the screen--drunken, rum-dulled and obscene, reeling noisily along in a crazy pageant.

With the appearance in Hollywood of the federal agents there was a new panic among the wilder set of the movie picture colony. Especially there was a stampede among the men who have millions invested in the spoiled darlings of the screen and who saw in the investigation the blasting of carefully built reputations and already thinned wallets.

More than ever an effort was made to throttle the spectacular tales of debauchery and loose-rein license--even if the slayer of Taylor escaped. But there were stories that even the gag of gold could not hush.

The secret service men had no local favors to ask--and none to grant. They were not perturbed by the whining threat of the movie magnates to move

their colony elsewhere if any of the Hollywood scandals become public property.

They were more interested in the fact that through all of the fantastic tapestry of picturesque vice ran the thread of the dope ring. In every picture was the touch of the drug peddler and the victims of opium, morphine, ether and cocaine.

The entrance of the secret service men into the sensational case resulted in a strange spurt of energy on the part of the local authorities.

This in turn resulted in the finding of Mabel Normand's love letters to Taylor...The contents of the letters, which were turned over to the district attorney, were kept secret, but it was reported that they proved sufficiently that the bond between Taylor and Miss Normand was something more than the friendship of "a much older man for a girl he was trying to help learn of art and literature."...

...At the same time the story of an opium smuggler of Chinatown seemed to bear out the theory outlined in the dispatches last week that Taylor may have been killed by some drug-inflamed member of Hollywood's "love cult."

The rites of the cult, as remarked in earlier dispatches, were those known to psychopathologists for centuries, but were not fit for print in a newspaper.

According to the Chinese, who was given immunity in exchange for his information, he supplied the opium for this circle of strange men and the "parties" at which the rites were celebrated.

The Chinese insists that these men had taken an oath of eternal love, and that Taylor, a member of this circle, may have broken the oath and been doomed to death.

With a further interview with the Chinese arranged, District Attorney Thomas Woolwine announced that his aides would be ordered to call in every moving picture star necessary to get at the truth of Taylor's death.

Sergeant Ed King of the prosecutor's staff, especially assigned to the case, announced that he expected to make an arrest in a few hours.

To those the secret service operatives paid small heed. They were

working alone, and that their investigation was being rewarded could not be doubted. The shameful stories of Hollywood's "parties" assail all but the ear deafened by some sort of persuasion.

The most recent of these revels, "parties" in which Taylor and some of his women friends are said to have taken part, were especially checked by the federal men in the hope of finding their clew there...

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February 10, 1922

Minneapolis Tribune

Los Angeles--Piece by piece, District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine reconstructed the scenes immediately preceding and following the murder of William Desmond Taylor, film director, today. The work kept him at his office late tonight questioning witnesses who, it is said, shed light upon the mystery...

...One of the puzzling bits of information developed by the investigation came from Verne Dumas. He is a director of a large oil company and resides near Taylor's home. He was the third person to see Taylor dead. Dumas told Woolwine that at 11 o'clock on the night Taylor was murdered he returned home and noticed one of the window shades raised. The fact impressed him because it was the first time, day or night, that any shade in Taylor's house was ever raised. When he entered the house the next morning after the body was found by Henry Peavey, the Negro servant, he noticed that the shade had been pushed aside by a table in the room. He also said that he did not see a chair lying across Taylor's legs...

Dumas' statement was corroborated by Neil J. Harrington, another oil man and also another neighbor. Harrington was the first man after Peavey to enter the house. He told of hearing Peavey's cries and observing the body. Like Dumas he confirmed the statement that Taylor was lying on his back with his arms at his sides and his legs together as if someone had placed them in that position.

Other witnesses who testified tonight were Captain Robertson, formerly in the United States army, who said he had known Taylor for three years. He identified the letters signed "Alias Jimmy V.," as in Sands' handwriting. Arthur Hoyt, a screen actor, was another who testified in relation to Taylor's life.

Charles Maigne, film director, accompanied by his wife, a beautiful and petite brunette, was another evening witness. As they stepped from the elevator to enter the district attorney's office, photographers with flashlight nearly started a fight. Maigne, who is used to cameras on the lot, wanted to thrash the photographers but was restrained by his wife, who thought it a great joke...

That Taylor made a will now appears probable according to information in the hands of Frank Bryson, public administrator, but no will has been found.

A telegram received by Mr. Bryson from Frank C. Schrenkeisen, New York attorney, representing Elsie [sic] Daisy Tanner, the only known heir to Taylor, was the first intimation received here concerning any will. The telegram was to the effect that Taylor's daughter is in possession of a letter informing her that Taylor had made a will and that the document was in a Los Angeles safe deposit box.

A sensation was created today by Captain of Detectives David Adams, when he said:

"I do not believe Mabel Normand killed Taylor. It is possible that she may have been the cause of his death, but entirely innocent of any connection with it. It is possible that some drug-crazed admirer may have followed her to Taylor's house and killed him in a jealous frenzy. Whoever killed him made sure of his deed. He shot at close range and made certain that he had killed Taylor before he left the house.

"I think Sands killed Taylor, but remember this," and Captain Adams paused significantly as a man who wants to be put on record, "I would not be surprised if we later found that any one of a dozen persons committed the act..."

...He said that he had questioned many intimates of Taylor and from them

had learned that the director was deeply in love with Miss Normand. He said that they told him she had expressed great admiration for Taylor, but considered him too old for her. If Taylor had been 10 years younger Miss Normand would have married him at one time, according to these friends.

...Mary Miles Minter, film actress, formerly directed by Taylor and said to have been a close friend, announced through her attorney her readiness to assist the authorities in any possible manner.

"Miss Minter has given the officers of the police department and the district attorney's office all the information she could," said her attorney. "She has refused to talk to newspaper men because the strain of the last few days has been great and because there is nothing she can tell them that will assist in the solution of the crime beyond a clear account of what little she knows, given to the proper authorities.

"She knows of nothing that can be considered evidence, but she placed herself at the disposal of the investigators and is willing to supply any information she may possess."

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February 10, 1922
SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Los Angeles--...Dumas said that on the night of the murder he had noticed that Taylor's study window shade was up several inches so anyone could have looked into the room and have seen him lying dead on the floor.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Twenty-five hundred dollars drawn from the First National Bank by William D. Taylor on January 31.

Twenty-five hundred dollars redeposited by Taylor on February 1, the day

of his murder.

This record, first disclosed yesterday, was the sensational development of a day's investigation in which District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine, in command, examined eleven witnesses and laid the basis for a probe that shall be so far reaching and complete as to leave no element, angle or motive without the compass of evidence.

The astonishing revelation regarding the money transaction was made yesterday by Public Administrator Frank Bryson.

In looking over Taylor's canceled checks and check-book stubs, Bryson came upon the check made out to "cash." The \$2500 was withdrawn on the last of the month.

Inquiry at the bank brought to light the deposit slip for the same amount and the same entry in Taylor's bank book...

The countrywide search for Sands has brought some interesting, and also confusing, reports regarding him. Police Detective J. B. Worley of Long Beach yesterday found, upon going through the records, that Sands was employed as a municipal life guard in that city on August 6, last, but failed to appear for work the next day and left behind him a pay voucher for \$2.50, which is still due him.

Statements from the Navy Department that descriptions of Edward F. Snyder, naval deserter, very accurately fit Sands, are doubted by Murray T. Snyder, telegraph operator at Marion, O., who stated yesterday, according to dispatches, that the man sought in connection with the Taylor murder could not be his son...

One of the District Attorney's first announcements during the day was that "the letters written by Mabel Normand to Mr. Taylor and now in our possession, contain nothing bearing upon the crime or tending to offer any solution of the mystery."

It is only to question witnesses at the request of the police and not to assume command of the investigation that he has undertaken the present work, Mr. Woolwine explained yesterday in a statement reading:

"It should be distinctly understood that the District Attorney's office

has, in no sense, 'taken over' the investigation of the Taylor murder, as such work is peculiarly within the province of the police authorities. The fact is that officers working on this case came to the District Attorney's office, as is their custom in many cases, and requested that this office counsel and advise with them during the progress of their investigation, and that we take statements of various persons which may tend to throw some light upon what has so far proven to be a most baffling mystery. Although the officers have worked diligently, there has not so far been developed or submitted to the District Attorney one scintilla of evidence tending to connect any one with the murder."...

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February 10, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles--On the night of his murder William Desmond Taylor had a woman visitor who preceded Mabel Normand as a guest of the film director by less than an hour.

This was easily the most important revelation today, coming as a direct result of the systematic and vigorous investigation undertaken by District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine.

Who the woman was, at what time she left the South Alvarado street apartment, what she did while there and afterward, and her relation to the murdered man are alike considerations of tremendous significance in the opinion of the authorities.

Whoever she was, she is a new figure; it would also seem that she is one of mystery, as no mention has been made of her heretofore...

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February 10, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

...The statement made to sheriff's officers by Mrs. MacLean is not only vital in itself, but has the added importance of eliminating Howard Fellows, Taylor's chauffeur, as the man she saw.

This was Mrs. MacLean's statement:

"I had seen the man whom I have described as wearing a plaid cap and a muffler open Mr. Taylor's door, come out, close it and walk away.

"This is perfectly clear in my mind; there cannot be the least question about it.

"Upon closing the door he walked away. I did not have occasion to suspect him of anything because he acted naturally.

"I saw his face squarely. I would be able to recognize him should I see him again."

"Was the man you saw Edward F. Sands?" asked the officer.

"Positively he was not.

"There was not the slightest resemblance between this man and Mr. Sands."

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

Oscar Fernbach

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 9.--...And from Henry Peavey, Taylor's negro man servant, who had found his master's body on the morning following the shooting, the district attorney wrung for the first time the admission that, prior to the visit paid to Taylor on that fatal evening by Mabel Normand, the film director had had another woman caller. She had preceded the moving picture actress by less than an hour.

Who this woman is is not disclosed by Woolwine. He will not even say that Peavey knew her identity. And Peavey, leaving the district attorney's office, doggedly refused to make any statement concerning her...

Charles Eyton had a long talk with Woolwine, and as he emerged from the District Attorney's rooms he gave emphatic denial to the report that it was he

who had secured custody of the Mabel Normand letters among Taylor's effects and had only today surrendered them to Woolwine.

His denial was corroborated by the announcement of Public Administrator Bryson that the letters had been discovered in a locked closet in Taylor's bungalow. Woolwine, when asked about them, made evasive answers.

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February 10, 1922
Walter Vogdes
SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 9.--...Henry Peavey, Taylor's negro valet, was the first witness to be called in the morning. He arrived dressed to kill, resplendent in brown tweed coat, golden golf knickers and green golf stockings. He was smiling and easy in his mind before seeing Woolwine and appeared in the same state after his testimony had been given.

In contrast was Howard Fellows, Taylor's chauffeur, who followed Peavey. Fellows, a lad with a weak, somewhat furtive face, sat on a bench in Woolwine's outer office and with twitching fingers lit one cigarette after another, each one on the preceding one.

When his turn came to enter the inner office he literally ran inside, the way a timorous man runs into an ice cold plunge. When he came out his expression was frightened as he pulled his cap over his eyes and streaked it down the hallway...

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February 10, 1922
NEW YORK HERALD (European Edition)

A dramatic clash between the police and the sheriff of Los Angeles is the newest feature in the kinema murder mystery.

The sheriff formally charges the police authorities with succumbing to

the influence brought to bear by powerful interests connected with the kinema industry with the object of checking further investigation into the circumstances in which Mr. Desmond Taylor, or Deane-Tanner, the film director, was shot in his residence at Hollywood last week,

The most important clues, states the sheriff, have not been followed up, and blind trails have been started in order to lead investigations away from certain persons high in the industry and stop the publicity which the case is receiving to the detriment of the film industry.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The police believe they have found the origin of the revolver with which William Desmond Taylor, film director, was slain, it was learned on reliable authority last night. Information has been placed in their possession that they think shows where the weapon was purchased, together with a description of the purchaser. Capt. of Detectives Adams was in conference on this point with one of his men late last night. If the data obtained are correct, the police believe they are on the verge of solving the mystery.

Mary Miles Minter, film star whose admiration of William Desmond Taylor, slain film director, has been admitted by her, was one of the first witnesses who appeared at Dist.-Atty. Woolwine's office for the purpose of giving a full statement of her knowledge of any facts that may aid in solving the Taylor murder mystery, that has baffled investigators for more than a week. The fact that she was closeted for two hours with the officials at the District Attorney's office was learned last night. During yesterday's session, which lasted from 10 a.m. until after midnight in Mr. Woolwine's office, thirteen other witnesses were examined.

Miss Minter's appearance at the District Attorney's office and her questioning there have not been made know or admitted by the officials, although the visit occurred last Tuesday. Ostensibly Mr. Woolwine assumed

charge of taking statements in cooperation with the police officers only yesterday.

That he questioned Miss Minter before the other witnesses is regarded as significant in some respects, since it is known that Miss Minter was an intimate friend of Mr. Taylor, and is reported by employees of Mr. Taylor to have held first place in his regard for many months.

Another film star of first magnitude has made a statement for the purposes of aiding the investigation, it was stated upon excellent authority late in the day. She is declared to be Mabel Normand, actress who was perhaps the last friend to see Mr. Taylor alive a week ago Wednesday night, when she left his apartments about 7:45 p.m.

Both Miss Normand and Miss Minter have suffered nervous collapses since the discovery of their friend's dead body with a bullet through his back.

John G. Mott, attorney for Miss Minter, declined last night to comment on the fact that Miss Minter was at the District Attorney's office last Tuesday for two hours. He said: "I can only say that Mary Miles Minter is cooperating with the officials and is willing and ready to cooperate fully with them."

At the home of both Miss Minter and Miss Normand, it was emphatically denied that either had made a statement attributed to Miss Normand yesterday concerning an asserted discussion between her and Mr. Taylor over her letters the night he was slain. The purported statement was that Miss Normand asked for her letters, and was told they had been sent to one or two high officials in the Famous-Players Lasky studio...

The first witness last night before the following officials--Mr. Woolwine, Chief Dep. Dist.-Atty. Doran, and Detective Sergeants Cato, Cahill and Winn--was Capt. Robertson, formerly of the United States Infantry, and an intimate friend of the dead man.

Capt. Robertson knew Mr. Taylor for three years. He was one of the first persons to enter the home the morning the murder was discovered. His statement concerning the physical facts at the scene of the crime was regarded as important. His knowledge of Mr. Taylor's life in recent years also was valuable in aiding the investigation.

Others questioned last night included Mr. and Mrs. Charles Maigne, the former being a motion picture director, and one of the first in the Taylor home after the murder; Arthur Hoyt, actor and friend of Mr. Taylor, and others, whose names have figured in the inquiry; Verne Dumas, a neighbor of Mr. Taylor, and Neil Harrington, also a neighbor.

Mr. Dumas, director in the Cal-Mex Oil Company, was among those who responded to the alarm after the murder. He also saw the blind in the front room of the Taylor apartment raised about four inches when he came home on the night of the slaying about 11 o'clock. The light was on at that time, but the fact that the curtain was raised was unusual, he said.

Mr. Harrington, also a broker, was the first person to enter the house upon the discovery of the body. Every detail of the arrangement of the furniture, the exact location and angle of the body and other physical facts were sought from him by the investigators.

Arthur Hoyt and Mr. and Mrs. Maigne stated upon leaving the District Attorney's office near midnight that they had promised not to divulge the nature of their information

Reports published in a local newspaper that a woman was in the Taylor home an hour before Miss Normand left there the night of the murder were denied by Mr. Woolwine, who stated no such information has been obtained.

A new witness who is believed to have seen the slayer lurking near the scene of the crime within a hour after the shooting on the 1st inst., was questioned in the afternoon.

This new witness, Patrolman Long, was the last from whom a statement was taken in the afternoon. He was the seventh person called to the District Attorney's office, which is working in cooperation with the police detectives.

Others from whom statements were taken in shorthand include Mr. and Mrs. Douglas MacLean, both widely known in filmdom; their maid, Christine Jewett; Harry Fellows, former chauffeur and more recently an assistant director for Mr. Taylor; Howard Fellows, chauffeur for the slain man; and Henry Peavey, colored butler-valet, who discovered his employer's body on the morning following the crime...

One of the outstanding developments of the day was the assurance given by Mrs. MacLean, it is declared, that she could recognize the man she saw leaving Mr. Taylor's home at 404-B South Alvarado street soon after the fatal shot was heard.

Another important point was set at rest when she was asked to look at Howard Fellows, the chauffeur, to see whether he could have been the man she saw. It is understood she positively stated he was not the man.

This factor was injected into the case by a peculiar circumstance. Mr. Fellows, who says he had been instructed by Mr. Taylor to call for him, went to the Taylor home and rang the doorbell about 8 o'clock, or a few moments afterward. It was believed he might have been the man seen by Mrs. MacLean, for he had said that after getting no response he walked away.

Mrs. MacLean, her husband and her maid were accompanied to the District Attorney's office yesterday morning and taken into a room adjoining that in which Mr. Fellows was waiting. She was asked whether he was the man and her answer in the negative is understood to have been positive...

The recently "refound" letters of Mabel Normand--letters which she wrote to Mr. Taylor and which could not be found in his possession for many days after his murder--still were the center of much discussion and speculation yesterday.

Mr. Woolwine's office has them now. They have been examined. They contain nothing regarded as particularly essential to the solution of the crime. The District Attorney's office feels the letters were in the clothes closet, under lock and key, hidden in a boot, during all the search of the premises. These assurances came from the officials on the case.

...Mr. Woolwine ordered transcripts of the testimony as soon as the shorthand notes could be transcribed. This significant order was taken to mean that the statements of the witnesses will be checked carefully, and immediately, one against the other...

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February 10, 1922

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Los Angeles, Feb. 9.--...Woolwine said that he would not call in Sennett, Marshall Neilan, Thomas Ince or a number of other directors reported to have been good friends of Taylor's to testify about his affairs with women.

"None of these gentlemen is on the list of those invited," he said...

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

New York, Feb. 9.--Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, defends her daughter from insinuations given publication by the Taylor murder case in a telegram received today by Arthur James, editor of the Motion Picture World. The message reads:

"Mary adored Taylor as a child would her father and is badly broken up over tragedy. Friendship between the two was beautiful and she feels that she has lost one of her dearest friends. Mary has made complete statement to authorities and they scout at newspaper insinuations that Taylor may have been slain because of jealousy over Mary. She is refusing to talk for publication but is aiding authorities in every way to solve mystery. Letters in press only those of adoring young girl to man almost three times her age.

(Signed)

"Charlotte Shelby"

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Investigators of the Sheriff's force believe that yesterday they completely eliminated Edward F. Sands as a suspect in the murder of director William Desmond Taylor, following a new conference with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas

MacLean.

Undersheriff Biscailuz and Chief of Criminal Investigation Manning visited Mrs. MacLean, wife of the motion-picture actor, at her residence at the direction of Sheriff Traeger.

Mrs. MacLean was questioned prior to being summoned to the District Attorney's office. She is the only witness who saw the unidentified man leaving the Taylor residence a few minutes after she heard the shot fired on the night the director was slain.

Mrs. MacLean stated positively, according to the Sheriff's office, that the man seen by her was not Sands. She knew Sands' appearance well, she said, and was unable to recognize the stranger who leisurely walked out of Mr. Taylor's apartments.

"We have been assured of Mr. and Mrs. MacLean's fullest cooperation in the investigation," said Undersheriff Biscailuz. "They told us all they know in complete detail. The man seen by her was neither Sands, nor Harry [sic] Fellows, the chauffeur, who rang the bell at Taylor's apartment shortly after 8 o'clock. She is confident she can identify the man who left the place if we can find him and we feel that her assistance in this direction may be of great value."...

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...A telegram received by Administrator Bryson yesterday from Frank G. Schrenkeisen, New York attorney representing Elsie [sic] Daisy Tanner, the only known heir of Taylor, was the first intimation received her concerning any will. The telegram was to the effect that Taylor's daughter is in possession of a letter informing her that he had made out a will and that the same was in a Los Angeles safety deposit box.

Inasmuch as no will was discovered in the only box that Taylor is known to have possessed, three theories have been advanced by the Public

Administrator.

The first, and most probable, is that Taylor is the owner of another box, the location of which was known only to himself, a box that contains documents of a highly confidential nature pertaining to the many baffling incidents of his life that have so far blocked all efforts of the police.

The second theory is that Taylor destroyed his will. This explanation is scouted by close friends of the late director, as he is known to have been very methodical in regard to business affairs, and the fact no will was found in his effects has been a matter of much conjecture.

The last explanation, and one which is given some credence, is that Taylor left bequests to a certain member of the film colony with whom he is known to have been on intimate terms, and that shortly following the discovery of the murder this paper was removed. That the star who might have been the beneficiary of this bequest might have been damaged rather than benefited in view of all the surrounding circumstances, is the ground advanced for this belief.

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February 10, 1922

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Los Angeles, Feb. 9.--Public Administrator Frank Bryson has taken possession of the effects of Taylor. He estimates the value of the estate left by the film director to be \$20,000. Heaped on Bryson's table and scattered about his office today is a miscellaneous collection of Taylor's personal belongings that in a way illustrate the varied and adventurous life he led. Guns, Alaskan boots, traveling kits, souvenirs of the wilds of the Far North, toilet articles, jewelry, clothing of the rougher quality of a man of the great outdoors and of the finest textures worn by a man of luxurious city life affords a sort of sign language scenario of the career of William Desmond Taylor.

Of the \$20,000 about \$6,000 is in cash in bank, jewelry, bonds and other

forms easily convertible into cash. The furniture has been wrapped and the books of Taylor's fairly large library have been boxed and all stored in a warehouse.

One of the revolvers belonging to Taylor is a German Lueger, with shoulder piece.

Taylor did not bring this back from France, but bought it in New York. A friend recalls that one day he and Taylor tried in vain to fit the shoulder piece to the revolver and finally asked Sands, the valet, if he knew anything about the Lueger. Without a word, Sands took up the two and by one motion fitted them together. Taylor turned to his friend and said, "Is there anything Sands does not know?" That was before his break with Sands, due to alleged forgery of his name to checks and thefts of clothing by his valet.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

NEW YORK TRIBUNE

Los Angeles, Feb. 9.--Evidence supporting the theory that William D. Taylor, murdered film director, was the victim of a hired assassin came to light today with the opening of a wide-spread investigation of the mystery by District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine.

The "fighting prosecutor," as he is called, personally questioned witness after witness, to lay a foundation for the grilling of at least two film stars, who will be called before him tomorrow...

Patrol Albert Long, whose statement does not seem to have played a part in the investigation carried on by the detective bureau, was the witness who added new facts concerning the activities about the Taylor bungalow on the night of the shooting.

The policeman said that shortly after 8 o'clock in the evening he had seen a man loitering in the street which skirts the side of the court in which the director's bungalow is located. He said the man wore a cap, an overcoat and a "mussy suit," which he was unable to describe in greater detail.

The description fits that of the man who, according to Mrs. Douglas MacLean, a neighbor of Taylor, was seen loitering about the front of the house two or more minutes after the firing of the shot that took the life of the director.

If the man seen by the policeman is the murderer it would indicate that the assassin was a cool-headed, professional gunman, who for some as yet unexplained reason remained within a stone's throw of the scene of the killing, trusting to luck to escape should the crime be prematurely exposed...

The prosecutor refused to comment on the testimony brought out during the day. He denied the report that Miss Mabel Normand had made a written statement in which she said that her reason for going to Taylor's home on the evening of the murder was to demand the return of certain letters she had written him. He said he had not heard from Miss Normand in any manner, but that he expected to some time tomorrow.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.silent-movies.com/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/> or at <http://www.silent-movies.com/search.html>. For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 70 -- October 1998 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:
Review: "Mysteries & Scandals"
Jeanie Macpherson

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation; (d) Taylor's associates and the Hollywood silent film industry in which Taylor worked. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

A nice selection of Taylor photos in JPG format can be seen on the web site of the TAYLOROLOGY mirror run by David Pearson at:
<http://www.uno.edu/~drcom/Taylorology/Photos/Taylor.html>

The July 1998 issue of BIOGRAPHY magazine (published by A&E Cable TV) contains a brief, error-filled, one-page article on the Taylor case titled "Shocking, Lurid and True: The Case of the Dead Director." The article includes photos of Taylor, Minter, and Shelby.

Review: "Mysteries & Scandals"

The episode of "Mysteries & Scandals" dealing with the William Desmond Taylor murder was broadcast on the "E!" cable channel early in June 1998. The best thing about the program was the 15 seconds from the 1913 film "The Quakeress"--giving us a brief glimpse of William Desmond Taylor as an actor. The program also displayed a very nice selection of photographs of Taylor. But overall the episode was poorly done, filled with errors, and not concerned with presenting an objective examination of the case, although two of the six interview subjects (Betty Fussell and A. C. Lyles) did an admirable job. The program presumed that Charlotte Shelby killed Taylor, and did not even bother to mention prime suspect Edward Sands! But even as a program devoted to the Shelby-as-killer theory, the program was poorly done because it ignored the real case against Shelby (a bullet from Shelby's gun was similar to the fatal bullet, Shelby had previously threatened to shoot Taylor, Shelby had previously gone to Taylor's home carrying her gun, etc.), and instead the program presented its case via rumors and speculation.

The following are some factual errors we noticed in the program:

1. The dramatization of Taylor's shooting is incorrect regarding the distance of the gun from the body, the location of the fatal wound, and the path of the bullet through the body. [See TAYLOROLOGY 22, "The Path of the Fatal Bullet"] And Taylor actually had on his jacket and vest when he was shot.

2. Taylor did not arrive in Hollywood "without a resume." He spent three years on the stage with actress Fanny Davenport, and also acted with a number of other prominent stage actors: Kathryn Kidder, Sol Smith Russell, Victory Bateman, and Harry Corson Clarke. In 1912, any actor with similar stage experience could have gotten a job in Hollywood.

3. Taylor was not the "Steven Spielberg of his generation." Taylor was

highly-regarded within the film industry, but not by the general public. Also, Taylor made no big spectacular films (such as had been made by Griffith, Brenon, Ince, De Mille), and Taylor never made his own independent films (such as had been made by Neilan, Tourneur, Vidor). Taylor worked within the studio system. A few months before his murder, MOTION PICTURE MAGAZINE had a readers' poll for "best director." The only directors receiving significant votes were (most to least): Griffith, C. B. De Mille, Neilan, Ince, W. De Mille, Fitzmaurice, Forman, von Stroheim, Dwan, Ingram, and Vidor.

4. It is stated that Taylor married at the age of 33 (incorrect) and left his wife at the age of 36 (correct). Taylor married at the age of 29 in 1901 and left his wife seven years later (not three years later) in 1908.

5. At the time of his death, Taylor was not Paramount's "most popular director"--that title would have belonged to Cecil B. De Mille, whose pictures were the most successful. And Taylor was not the most popular among Paramount employees--contemporary reports are mixed, including a report that Taylor was nicknamed "Simon Legree" (the cruel slave owner from "Uncle Tom's Cabin") because he was such a demanding director. [See TAYLOROLOGY 32, dispatch of Wallace Smith]

6. At the time of Taylor's death, Mary Miles Minter was 19 years old, not 17.

7. The last day of Taylor's life was not "a normal day shooting at the studio." Taylor was between films and spent almost no time at the studio that day. The brief time he spent at the studio did not involve any filming. [See TAYLOROLOGY 21, "The Last Day of Taylor's Life"]

8. Mabel Normand never said that Taylor was "arguing very heatedly with someone" on the telephone when she arrived. Taylor was having a normal telephone conversation with Antonio Moreno when Mabel arrived.

9. The photo of "Taylor's dead body" is not Taylor--it is the photo of a suicide victim in Connecticut, a young man in his 20's. [See TAYLOROLOGY 65, "175 Errors and Contradictions in 'A Cast of Killers'", item 102]

10. After the body was found, Peavey did not call the police. The

police were called by Taylor's neighbors. [See TAYLOROLOGY 56: "Mrs. Verne Dumas, who heard his [Peavey's] cries, called the police."]

11. Studio executives were not burning papers in Taylor's fireplace--there was no fireplace in Taylor's home.

12. It is stated that "there was no mention of homosexuality in the press." False. [See TAYLOROLOGY 65, "175 Errors and Contradictions in 'A Cast of Killers'", item 43]

13. It is stated that soon after the murder, "everybody was talking about Mary Miles Minter's underpants." At that time, the rumors were about a supposedly-initialed nightgown, not about "underpants."

14. "Soon after Taylor's murder, Mary's bank account began to shrink." That is not accurate. Prior to the Taylor murder, Mary essentially had no bank account whatsoever--everything was in Shelby's accounts. Mary did not begin to personally receive her own paychecks until months after the murder, shortly before she moved out. [See TAYLOROLOGY 35.]

15. The "finger of suspicion" did not only point at Charlotte Shelby--Edward Sands was also a major suspect and some investigators thought Sands killed Taylor. [See TAYLOROLOGY 19, "The Case against Edward Sands"] No serious documentary about the Taylor murder could fail to mention Sands.

16. The photo of "Faith MacLean" is actually Kathlyn Williams.

17. Faith MacLean did not "look out the window"--she looked out her front door, which also had a screen door. [See the statement of Faith MacLean in TAYLOROLOGY 62.]

18. Two of the photos of "Mary Miles Minter" are not Minter. One of the photos is Marion Davies, from the film "Show People."

19. At that time, Wallace Reid was Paramount's biggest star, not Arbuckle.

20. It is stated that at the time of the Taylor case, Arbuckle was "on trial for rape and murder." False. He was only on trial for manslaughter.

21. Mary Miles Minter was not Charlotte Shelby's only alibi witness. Actor Carl Stockdale stated that he was with Shelby at the time of the murder.

22. It is stated that Mary wrote in her diary that her mother killed Taylor. Prove it. During the 1937 grand jury investigation, Mary's diaries were subpoenaed and found to be of "utterly no value" regarding the Taylor case. [See TAYLOROLOGY 22, "The 1937 Grand Jury Investigation"]

23. It is stated that "just about everyone agrees that Charlotte Shelby committed the murder." Not hardly. The authors of two of the three books about Taylor (Giroux, Long) are not convinced that Shelby killed Taylor, nor is the author of MABEL (Fussell). [Also see TAYLOROLOGY 58, "In Defense of Charlotte Shelby"] And several investigators on the case thought Sands was the killer.

24. Mabel Normand died in a sanitarium in Monrovia, not Pasadena.

In addition to the above factual errors, there were a number of rumors which the program presented as facts. These should have been clearly labeled as only rumors (and rather dubious rumors, at that):

1. That a cache of pornographic photos was found in Taylor's home.
2. That Minter's underwear was found in Taylor's home.
3. That an impressive collection of ladies' lingerie was found in Taylor's home.
4. That Shelby was "deranged."
5. That on the day of Taylor's death, Charlotte Shelby had hit Mary Miles Minter.
6. That Minter wanted to "shack up" with Taylor.
7. That Peavey often procured sex partners for Taylor. [See TAYLOROLOGY 65, "175 Errors and Contradictions in 'A Cast of Killers'", item 146]
8. That studio executives had planted items in Taylor's home.
9. That Shelby had bribed "three generations" of District Attorneys.
10. That years later, Mary kept her mother locked in an upstairs bedroom.

Of course, the batch of rumors spread recently do not deserve the same status as those rumors which were circulating immediately after the Taylor murder.

The latter are part of the history of the Taylor case, the former are not. The false contemporary rumors had an impact on the nation's reaction to the Taylor murder, and an impact on Hollywood's reaction to people who were close to the murder; but false recent rumors have no real justification for repeating, even as rumors.

The program naturally had to conform to the series format for "Mysteries & Scandals": fast-paced, tabloid television, with cynical wiseguy narration and focusing on sensational material, in order to draw and hold an audience who had never heard about the subject. But the program could have followed that formula and still presented a highly-accurate show, instead of the error-filled hodgepodge which was broadcast. Plus, there were many dramatic and lurid contemporary rumors and incidents which could have been discussed and dramatized, instead of recently-written nonsense.

A good documentary on the Taylor case still needs to be produced. On a scale of 1 to 10, we would give a "3" rating to "Mysteries & Scandals." The good things in the program: the photographs and film of Taylor, and the interview segments with Betty Fussell and A. C. Lyles.

Jeanie Macpherson

In 1920, William Desmond Taylor was one of the "Big Five" directors at Paramount, along with Cecil B. De Mille, William De Mille, George Fitzmaurice, and George Melford. The "Big Five" all received "the name above the title" when their films were advertised. With the exception of George Melford, each of these directors was primarily associated with one female scenario writer, forming a collaborative creative team of writer and director: William Desmond Taylor and Julia Crawford Ivers; Cecil B. De Mille and Jeanie Macpherson, William De Mille and Clara Beranger, George

Fitzmaurice and Ouida Bergere. The most successful team was that of Cecil B. De Mille and Jeanie Macpherson, and their collaboration continued throughout the silent era. Indeed, Jeanie Macpherson was one of the very top screenwriters of the silent film era, and she also directed and starred in a number of early films.

In addition, Jeanie Macpherson was Mary Miles Minter's "best friend" for several years [see TAYLORLOGY 11 and 69].

The following is a selection of interviews with, and articles by, Jeanie Macpherson, written between 1917 and 1924.

* * * * *

July 21, 1917

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVING PICTURE WORLD

Development of Photodramatic Writing

Writing for the photodrama is becoming more and more difficult every day. Every day new photo-dramatic symbols are being created to take the place of involved action or explanatory subtitles. As the art progresses, so does the public's understanding of the art, and the methods we used two years ago to explain certain things are now archaic, as, for example, not so long ago, when we wanted to show a man thinking of his sweetheart, we had him sitting with his head in his hands, casually gazing into a fire, but faded in a vision of his sweetheart on the scene over his head. Now we get the effect by simply having him bring out her handkerchief, a glove or something which shows the same thing. The audience understands it, and the obvious symbols are no longer a necessity.

Illustrating sub-titles by means of moving pictures is also passed. No longer do we have to describe a scene of a sub-title and then act out the scene. Now a sub-title is being dropped wherever possible and everything told in terms of action. If a woman is going down town to buy a new hat

because her old one is worn out, we no longer have to have our actors make a lot of gestures and use two or three spoken titles. It is simply necessary for them to show the worn, torn ribbon of the hat, with, of course, the necessary expression to show what is to be conveyed. To show a telephone conversation it is no longer necessary to show both parties hanging up the 'phone. If one hangs up the 'phone we know the conversation is discontinued. We no longer have to show a letter inserted more than once or twice. When the audience reads the letter they know that it is in the person's possession and they can follow it. It isn't necessary to show it from time to time.

We have found out it isn't necessary for a photo-drama to have only one dramatic scene, but each scene must be a drama in itself. The whole picture must be made up of a series of small dramas. This makes the completed drama a mosaic of little ones. Scenes that have no dramatic value in them, or say nothing, must be eliminated. So the scenario writer must bear in mind at all times not what he can put into a picture, but what he can leave out. If each scene has a why and a wherefore and an excuse for being, then you get a perfect continuity.

When I speak of eliminating scenes I do not mean that scenes must be cut down to threadbare, straight plot. I find in a great many pictures that the writers deviate from their main theme--that they have two or three themes wandering through the story, which necessarily makes it complicated and hard to follow. If the writer will take a simple single theme, then work up the detail, decorate it with embroidery and lace, every little bit different from the last, but have each bit of trimming pertain directly to the main theme, he will have a much better story. Instead of that, writers branch off with a counterplot or sub-plot which is upsetting and makes the story hard to follow.

Within the next two years I expect to see a school of photodramatists as well known and as distinguished as the dramatists of the speaking stage. Already this school is being developed and established, and within that time it will be set on a firm foundation and photodramatic writers will be given their proper place and will be remembered for their contributions toward this

new art.

* * * * *

December 1917
Peter Gridley Schmid
PHOTO-PLAY WORLD

Jeanie Macpherson, The Screen's Most Successful Author

The persons in two out of the three important branches of the motion picture producing industry are known to the public. The third branch, although as important as any, seldom receives its full share of credit in the public eye.

We all know of Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and William S. Hart. The names of D. W. Griffith, Thomas H. Ince and Cecil B. De Mille are familiar to practically every patron of the screen. The first group represents the acting faction of the photoplay industry, the last three symbolize the directing end of the movies. Little is known by the layman, however, regarding the authors' branch of the business despite the fact that some of the most talented writers in the world are now contributing their genius to this new art.

In this last branch of the photoplay producing field, there are "stars" just as there are in the acting and directing branches. Foremost among these star writers is Jeanie Macpherson, a young woman, but one whose success is entirely out of proportion with her age. What Mary Pickford stands for in the acting branch, or D. W. Griffith represents in the directing end of the game, Jeanie Macpherson typifies in the scenario field. Miss Macpherson's record as a screen author is twenty-four big productions in less than three years, including Geraldine Farrar's "Joan the Woman," Mary Pickford's "The Little American," and Miss Farrar's new Aztec spectacle, "The Woman God Forgot."

Miss Macpherson, who arrived in New York, recently, from the Artcraft studio, in California, in speaking of her work brought out several important tips to amateur scenario writers who often wonder why their material is not accepted. "If writers would only study audiences and pictures, they would soon find their material has a better chance to be produced," said Miss Macpherson. "The trouble with most writers seems to be their utter disregard for public taste, and the scripts that many send in are proof conclusive of the fact that they know very little about motion pictures. What I mean to say is that, strange as it may seem, many authors know less about what the screen demands in the way of stories, than the lay public.

"One way of finding out what the public will like is to learn the kind of material that it dislikes. If many writers would faithfully attend picture theatres, and study the screen as well as the audience, they would soon realize that they are writing directly in the face of motion picture possibilities and public criticisms. If they would listen to the comments of those seated about them, remember the dislikes of the spectators and avoid writing similar material, they would soon get on the right track. It is true that very often we find it 'hard to please the public,' but at the showing of every picture there is a consensus of opinion on certain scenes, themes and plots. Therefore, it is necessary to study the patron who pays to see a photoplay, the person who seeks to be entertained, because, as a rule, when that person is not entertained he or she will readily say so.

"Many stories make good reading and yet are impossible for the screen. In writing a photoplay we must photograph it in our minds, or in other words, picture it, rather than write it. A scenario is only the directions, so to speak, of the photoplay. It is an index of a series of pictures, not a literary masterpiece, although much of our best literature makes splendid motion picture material. Each picture in this series must have individual merit, the more merit in the way of action, thrills or charm that we can inject into each picture, in continuity with the story, of course, the better the photoplay.

"I have always endeavored to base my stories on subjects of big

interest, and have found that such 'big interest' is evident in productions of either timely or historical appeal. I am not speaking of ordinary photoplays that please. My efforts have always been toward themes of more than ordinary interest. For instance, in 'Joan the Woman' we have a historical figure known to the whole world. The very theme has immediate interest. Joan of Arc is known from the cradle up and right there we have a big start. My new story for Miss Farrar, 'The Woman God Forgot,' deals with another page from history and has to do with the Aztecs, a wonderfully interesting people, at the time of the Spanish invasion under Cortez.

"Mary Pickford's photoplay, written by myself, 'The Little American,' was created when Uncle Sam began his plea for patriotism. It was a story up to the minute and still is a timely production. It places before the eyes of the public things it has been reading about. At present I am on my way to Washington to consult several government officials on another story dealing with a subject uppermost in the public mind at this minute. Immediately, when its title is known it will arouse interest.

"Very frequently, timely interest will ensure bigger success for a film than historic associations. Photoplays which are merely timely, however, are likely to have a shorter life than those which center about such universal figures as Joan of Arc and Cortez, to use some of my subjects as illustrations.

"Too much emphasis, however, cannot be placed upon treatment. As I have said before, writing a scenario is an entirely different process from writing a short story or a play. The action must be visualized in all three processes, but in the case of the short story and the play, visualization is necessary only to obtain vividness of description and effective staging; while in the photoplay one must actually tell the story by means of pictures.

"Novelty of theme is another important aim of the scenario writer. This does not mean that one should resort in every film to trick effects. One should aim, like the playwright and short story writer, to interpret a new phase of life."

* * * * *

July 1920

Doris Delvigne

MOTION PICTURE

Mind the Little Things

"You must build up your hero so that every young man in the audience pictures himself as that hero. You must build up your heroine so that every young girl will feel herself the heroine, wish herself the heroine--or understand the heroine's feelings. Unless you can do this," and Jeanie Macpherson smiled whimsically, "you are not in sympathy with your public."

There's nothing masculine about this little French-Scotch girl who has interested the dramatic world with her craftsmanship. She's not a blue-stocking with emancipated ideas, nor has her contract with the biggest men in the motion picture world given her that swaggering independence which is supposed to adhere to begoggled authors. She is the most utterly feminine thing you ever beheld. She loves pretty clothes--her taste is fastidious.

"So many people don't succeed in writing because their motive is all wrong," she continued. "Theirs is a desire to gather in some of the huge sums purported to be paid for screen dramas. No one can hope to become a great writer who begins with that false motive. All of us have to work--work again and then again.

"And the biggest mistake of all is to wait for the great idea! Stories are not evolved in that way. And if there's one point I'd like to drive home more than anything else, it is MIND THE LITTLE THINGS. It is not a question of evolving a new plot. We are using the same plots and dramatic situations over and over again. It is the way the little things are worked out.

A motion picture script used to read, 'John and Mary love each other. They stand by a table and he declares his love.' Today I would show John looking furtively, then extracting a rose from his pocket--the rose she had worn and loved, and in his very expression and the fondling of the rose the audience

knows that John loves Mary. In everything one must find the symbol. That is the great secret of the picture art--finding the symbol for a thought."

We were sitting in Jeanie Macpherson's den and it was very pleasant. Most things about Jeanie Macpherson would be pleasant--she would see to it that they were. Yellow china blinks sunnily upon still more yellow roses in a tall vase; the brass tea-kettle catches gleams of old gold from the skylight, with its shirred yellow curtains; the fat chair, made of old hogsheads and covered with yellow and black plaid cushions, invites one to a prolonged visit; and her desk is half the width of the room, made of rough timber and covered with interesting-looking memoranda. Above all else there are books and books. Mary Roberts Rinehart's "Dangerous Days" noses "The Holy Land," while "Browning's Poems" whisper to a beautiful copy of "Jeanne D'Arc."

And Jeanie herself was clad in a faultlessly tailored pale blue linen frock, with the daintiest of net undersleeves and neck-ruffle. She had tossed the big white picture hat of organdy on the already crowded desk when she came in. She is ultra-feminine, even down to the immaculate little white slippers. Her hair parts on one side and falls into soft waves which are absolutely natural--the sort of curly hair one saw years ago--like molasses candy--always shiny--brilliant with life and marcelled by Mme. Nature.

I had asked her if she'd rather originate than adapt a novel to the screen--one felt this girl was something of an authority.

"Frankly," she replied. "I would rather originate. Authors naturally find it difficult to realize that we do not slice into their stories in order to find what we can take out--that is a misunderstanding, but one always cherishes one's brain-child. I do and you do. But in trying to preserve that which is good in their work we must tell in picture symbols what is taking place. We have to put over some motive or idea--we must utilize an entirely different set of tools. In order to save the main situation we are sometimes obliged to work out a new play.

"When I did 'The Trail of the Lonesome Pine,' John Fox said, 'Good Lord, there's nothing left in it but the pine!' And witty Eugene Walter retorted,

'You're wrong, it's a REDWOOD!' If authors attempted to put their own books into continuity they would discover just what difficulties we encounter."

"Just how do you work out the theme?"

"Always I get some idea," she answered, "perhaps just a small idea. Then I let the situation tell me about the characters. Characters will come and talk to you. If you want them to do a certain thing they will sit right up there on your desk and yelp at you and say, 'Entirely illogical. You know I'd never do that!' Day by day they take on new freshness, and finally at the end they are actually human beings. I can't tell them what to do--they tell me what THEY ARE GOING TO DO.

"I write a very detailed continuity," she told me. "That's why Mr. De Mille can work so fast. Nobody has to stand around waiting. I have written in every gesture, every emotion. Of course, some directors won't have that--they want the barest suggestions in their script and that is why many stories are haphazard--the director just can't remember the continuity of the story and the characterizations at the same time.

"And one can't drive the brain, either," she continued; "one must take time for recreation, but not too much time."

"Your recreation?" I asked.

"Flying," she told me. "I would say generally, learn to fly! The analogy between flying and flights of fancy is obvious. You may give people rules about flying, let them collect a library on the subject, but ultimately--to fly well, you have to discard teachers, books and theories and just fly."

She was talking in riddles, and yet when you learn that she does actually fly, you understand--on De Mille Field her ship soars about, exciting Hollywood citizens. She has her license now, polishes up her machine, tightens it, loves it--with it she is just like a little girl with her doll.

And it is not a far-fetched comparison, that of Jeanie Macpherson to a little girl.

* * * * *

July 1921

Barbara Beach

MOTION PICTURE

The Literary Dynamo

Mary Pickford once said to me: "People are very like electric dynamos--the more they work the more energy they store up for future use. The higher rate of speed they demand from themselves, the more mileage they can make."

Jeanie Macpherson is one of those frail appearing, tiny, feminine persons of high voltage power. From her brain has sprung the Big Ideas for all the Cecil B. De Mille features: from her hand has come the completed scenarios replete with original business for the picture dramas that have stood, each one of them, as milestones in the photoplay's progress.

For five years now she has worked in an office in the main building of the Lasky studio. Her typewriter has been the last to cease its daily chatter, her light alone has been seen burning until one and two in the morning, through the leafy pepper trees that screen her office windows. She has had no time for play, very little for recreation--she has sacrificed all the little personal touches of home life that mean so much to most women. She has practically no time to spare for the dressmaker, the milliner or shopping.

She is a prodigious author who uses the screen as her medium.

When one crosses the threshold of her office one enters what appears to be the interior of a log cabin. Rough hewn logs form the walls, the huge desk, the table, chairs and benches. There is an open fireplace of rough stone with charred embers on the hearth. There are books and books, Merrick and James Cabell, Navajo rugs and the skins of wild animals soften heavy footsteps.

Sitting in one of Jeanie Macpherson's primitive but comfortable rockers, I asked her why she did it--why she worked twice as hard as the average

person. She came from behind the huge desk that practically hid her tiny feminine form and sat down nearer me on a stiff, yellow-covered bench. She crossed her dainty feet in a business-like manner, while the afternoon sun filtering through the windows formed an aureole about her silky fair hair.

"When I was very, very young," she told me, looking at that precise moment like a twenty-two-year-old except for her air of assurance, "when I was VERY young, I made up my mind that I wanted to be successful while I was still young and could enjoy it. I wanted to reach the goal I had set for myself before I was thirty--I wanted fame and money.

"I figured that to accomplish this I must work twice as many hours and twice as hard as the average person. I have. While other authors gave themselves long vacations to woo inspiration, I sat and worked at my desk. I have found that if a director and a picture company are waiting for you to write a story for them, and you know that each day you delay means a wasting of their time and money, you're very apt to produce the goods. Wooing inspiration is a long and thankless pastime. For the more one woos her the farther away she flies. So I sit at my desk and work. Perhaps it is the persistent Scotch in me that keeps me at it--who knows?"

While the Scotch blood of her father has endowed Jeanie Macpherson with persistency and caution, the French ancestry of her mother has given her enthusiasm, volubility, color and imagination. Jeanie was born in Boston, but received her education in Paris at the school of Mademoiselle De Jacques, where Mark Twain's daughter was educated. While it was perfectly natural that she should become a writer--her ancestors on her mother's side all having been writers and publishers--Jeanie did not turn to the world of literature to win her pristine fame.

She went on the stage. Her first appearance was with Forbes Robertson. Then she went with Edgar Selwyn's tour of "Strongheart." Later she played the Spanish role of "Tita" with James T. Powers in "Havana," which ran a year on Broadway.

At that time pictures were just beginning to gain the attention of the public, and from the first time Miss Macpherson heard of them she became

interested in their possibilities and had faith in their future as the coming art. She grew very anxious to get into pictures, but knew no one connected with them, nor anyone who could even tell her how to try to get in. So she sought out the Biograph company by looking up the address in the telephone directory. The now-famous D. W. Griffith gave her a trial and engaged her. She worked from "bits" to "leads," for in those days everyone served a long, hard apprenticeship with the camera before they were given the best parts. Miss Macpherson stayed with Griffith two years and played the leads in "Spanish Gypsy," "Madame Rex" and "Out of the Shadows."

Next she joined the Edison company and worked under the direction of Oscar Apfel. From there she went to Universal. Coming out on the train from New York, she thought up an original story. At Universal her director found himself without an adequate story. Miss Macpherson told him about hers with the result that she was asked to put it in scenario form and act in it. But the director failed to get all there was out of the plot, and some time later Universal-Jewel let her do her story all over again. This time she not only starred in the picture, but directed it as well. In appreciation of her successful work with this production, Universal gave her her own company, and Jeanie Macpherson wrote her own scenarios, starred in her pictures and directed them.

At the end of six months' time she went with the manager of the Powers Brand to the Criterion Features, and again directed and was featured with Wilfred Lucas. There, too, she wrote all her own stories.

Miss Macpherson told me this story of her life in a quick, staccato manner. Truth to tell, she had a million details awaiting her attention. One of these details was Cecil B. De Mille, who was waiting for her to accompany him downtown to look over some new stage settings. Wishing to hear all there was to tell--for, being a born story-writer, Jeanie's conversation is always interesting--I hurried along by her side as she slipped into a huge squirrel coat and trotted through the studio to her car. She does not walk slowly and sedately as one imagines great writers should, but indulges in a cross between a fast walk and a run.

"I am very thankful for all my acting experiences in pictures," she told me, in her quick, accurate way, as we hurried out, "for it taught me exactly what could and what could not be screened, an intimate knowledge which is absolutely essential to becoming a successful scenarist.

"I faced death several times. Especially memorable was my experience while playing the leading feminine role in Jack London's 'Sea Wolf,' produced by Balboa. Henry King and I had a scene where we were lowered in a lifeboat from the stern of a schooner. The rope broke, tossing us into the middle of the Pacific. The schooner was sailing at full speed. Mr. King could swim a little and I not at all. Our small lifeboat had lost its oars and was drifting bottom-side up, farther from us every second. The schooner was leaving us rapidly. I had hit the water 'flat,' as the saying is, and had so completely lost my wind that I wasn't able to think very clearly, but I did sense one thing--the thing that every well-trained 'movie' remembers on all occasions--the camera. To those on the schooner's stern I indicated 'turn the crank,' and while the captain was busy trying to reach us with a rope, our alert little cameraman caught it. It was just the sort of scene we needed, and I can vouch for its realism! We were finally hauled to safety, but very, very wet."

Jeanie's last screen appearances were under the direction of Cecil B. De Mille, with Geraldine Farrar in "Carmen" and with Mabel Van Buren in "The Girl of the Golden West." From her pen have come "The Dream Girl," "The Golden Chance," "The Heart of Nora Flynn," "The Love Mask," "Joan the Woman," "A Romance of the Redwoods," and "The Little American" for Mary Pickford, "Male and Female," "The Whispering Chorus," "Old Wives for New," "Don't Change Your Husband," "For Better, for Worse," "Something to Think About," "Forbidden Fruit" and "The Affairs of Anatol."

It was because she decided--especially with the advent of multiple reeled films--it was better to specialize, she chose the scenario end of the business.

"I shall always be grateful for Mr. De Mille's assistance," Jeanie Macpherson told me. "He is a hard taskmaster and he demands that a thing

shall be perfect. He used to scold me and show me where my scenarios were wrong, and we would work them out together. It was hard, but it taught me that anything worth doing at all was worth doing perfectly."

Now Miss Macpherson writes all her own business into the scenario, knowing that Mr. De Mille will never change it--that he has perfect confidence in her.

* * * * *

August 1921
Marion Lee King
PICTURE-PLAY

What About the Foreign Films?

If you are an American and a motion-picture fan you hold the answer to the endless discussion of the pros and cons of showing foreign-made films in America. You have probably seen "Passion," "Deception," or "Gypsy Blood"--perhaps all of them. Many thousands of Americans have. But you have not seen the average German picture. You won't. The cost of keeping theaters open in America is too great to encourage audiences to stay away from them. And that is what the showing of most foreign-made films would result in, providing the censor allowed them to be shown--which he wouldn't.

Jeanie Macpherson, who prepares the stories for all of the big Cecil De Mille pictures, recently spent several weeks in Europe, conferring with the chief motion-picture makers there. And she returned with the sincere conviction that European films are not a menace to the American industry.

"WE are democratic," Jeanie Macpherson told me from the midst of a bewildering array of treasures from Paris modistes that made everything else seem relatively unimportant. "And foreign artists are not. That is why American films are going to hold first place in the hearts of American people, no matter how good the foreign pictures are. We believe in our whole-hearted countrymen, and they don't. We believe that boy-and-girl love

stories--dramas of our own people--are important. And they"--she broke into a delicious ripple of laughter at the thought of it--"they think they are positively childish. As Ernest Lubitsch said to me, 'Your domestic picture is quite beyond our ken.' And this is not true of Germany only.

"The picture producers of France and Italy, too, think that American forms of entertainment are childish. And Americans would find THEIR stories disgusting. We are working from an entirely different point of view, and until they can understand Americans better, they can't compete with American picture makers to any extent. After that--well, we'll have to watch out.

"Of course, people must realize that 'Passion,' 'Deception,' and 'Gypsy Blood' are not typical of their pictures. They are the best of them.

"Those productions have shown Lubitsch to be a master in staging spectacles. But in little, intimate scenes they can't touch the work of American directors. We have not been making spectacles here because the exhibitors insisted that the public did not want them. The success of 'Passion' and 'Deception' has disproved that, and now we can show what we can do along that line. Mr. De Mille's and my 'Joan the Woman,' made six years ago, is indicative of our ability to make spectacles. Abroad that is a great success and is admittedly just as good as their big productions."

When discussion of the invasion by foreign films was just beginning Herbert Howe said in "A Trip Through Europe's Filmland," in PICTURE-PLAY, "It is a reflection upon our initiative if we, who have had the benefit of uninterrupted prosperity, are defeated in art by a nation which has been defeated in war, crushed with debt, and burdened with world hatred."

Miss Macpherson found that the motion-picture industry had been protected and fostered in Germany throughout the war. We need not look on their productions as having been made under any difficulties. They were a privileged industry.

Incidentally, while many people in this country are reluctant to enjoy the works of German artists, the Germans are eagerly taking up American songs. Miss Macpherson found "A Japanese Sandman" a popular song in Germany, as is "Avalon." But they are performed as serious dramatic works, which

suggests the kind of treatment that whimsical themes in motion pictures, so dear to the hearts of the American public, would get there. "The Merchant of Venice" is also being performed in Germany, but in such a manner that even Shakespeare might not recognize it. And, most striking of all, German words have been written to "Over There," and the tune is heard wherever one goes.

A print of "Forbidden Fruit," made by Mr. De Mille from a story by Jeanie Macpherson, arrived while Miss Macpherson was in Germany, and she saw it in company with Ernest Lubitsch. He marveled at the dream scenes, but he quite frankly admitted that he could not understand the boy-and-girl love affair. It was too wholesome!

He spoke of the superiority of American films in plot construction. He said--and this information was elicited not from modest Miss Macpherson, but from her rightfully proud mother--that he had never seen so smoothly running a plot in a motion picture as in "Forbidden Fruit." That was his introduction to the mysteries of continuity writing. Foreign directors work without the aid of the carefully worked out scripts that American directors have. And that they are not unwilling to learn from us is suggested by the fact that Miss Macpherson is to return abroad next January. This information was also advanced by Miss Macpherson's mother.

Perhaps you have wondered if foreign stars will supplant our Pickford, our Ray, our Gishes, and our Talmadges.

Miss Macpherson's answer to the question was a gesture of mock horror. "You should see them!" she exclaimed. "They are indescribable. The splendid artists we have seen in the films already imported are not typical. Usually even their ingenues are huge, according to our standards, and they wear bulky clothes and cotton stockings. I got to thinking of Mr. Ziegfeld as I watched some of them, and I burst out laughing."

Miss Macpherson welcomes the invasion of foreign films as a whiplash to stir American producers to their best work. Her attitude toward them shows, above all else, good sportsmanship. Her stand is "If any one can take anything away from the American producer they deserve to have it taken away."

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October 15, 1921

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

Henry C. De Mille, father of Cecil B. and William De Mille and himself a playwright and associate of David Belasco, used to say to ambitious young writers for the stage, "Plays are not written, but rewritten!"

That applies to scenarios also.

It is not an unusual thing for an author to spend a whole year or more writing a novel. Writers for the stage take months to evolve a play, and more months to whip it into proper form for the footlights. But somehow amateurs who attempt writing for the screen think they can dash off their thoughts in a few hours, without stopping to revise them or polish them, and call it a photoplay and have it accepted by a producer.

I don't think any scenario written in that way has ever been bought. I know that if I were to work in that style, I would soon be looking for a job.

Paramount receives thousands of photoplays annually from unknown writers. We have a large staff of readers to inspect this horde of manuscripts and decide whether there is anything in them that can be placed upon the screen. It is safe to say that not fifty per cent of them would ever have been sent in by their writers, had the writers placed the stories in their desk drawers for six months and then drawn them out and reread them.

The main thing in a good scenario is story. The beginner flounders about with background and psychology and symbolism and cutbacks into ancient history and quite forgets that what the audience wants is--story. Everything should be subordinated to the story.

In revising your scenario, this should be kept in mind. Try the practice, the next time you go to the movies, of writing down some of the

subtitles. See how you might condense them further and still keep the meat of them. It will teach you word-values.

Work over your scenario and revise it until there is not an incident in it that does not do its bit toward developing the plot; so that there is not a superfluous word.

I remember writing titles for "The Affairs of Anatol" and revising them until I thought there was not a word there that did not serve its purpose. I took the titles to Mr. De Mille, and he said, "Cut them each down fifty feet." Fifty feet are fifty words! That meant more hours of labor to find substitute words that would carry the meaning more succinctly.

I have rewritten my scenarios as many as six complete times before I got them in the shape where they were acceptable, even to myself. Rewriting a title fifty times is a common occurrence with me.

If you revise your scenarios often, you'll write fewer scenarios, but you'll have a much better chance of selling them...

There are two kinds of directors. In the studios they call them directors who "shoot close to the script" and directors who "shoot wild." The first kind sticks closely to the story as the scenario writer has laid it out; the second takes all kinds of liberty with the scenario.

Sometimes it is necessary to make changes in the scenario. Unexpected difficulties or unforeseen chances to better the picture are usually taken as warranting changes.

Usually the scenario writer is consulted when changes are contemplated. Frequently the author of the story is taken along with the company when the story is being filmed, and his or her advice sought. My typewriter and I are usually at Mr. De Mille's service during the shooting of one of his pictures, whether in the studio or a hundred miles from there.

Sir Gilbert Parker saw every foot of his story, "A Wise Fool" filmed and made many wise suggestions. So did Elinor Glyn in the case of "The Great Moment."

Filming a picture means taking a story out of the world of words and putting it into the world of motion--two different mediums. Naturally some

revisions are necessary.

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October 22, 1921

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

Over the desk of every writer connected with Cecil B. De Mille's scenario staff is a small card bearing the slogan: "Say it with props."

The existence of these cards is not an accident. They were printed and distributed by direct order of the producer and they carry to the writers one of the greatest problems of continuity writing and, in fact, of all screen writing.

For the benefit of the uninitiated let me explain that a "prop" is anything that may be used by the character. A cigar, a letter, a picture, or a grand piano may all be props. "Say it with props" therefore means: Put over your idea whenever possible with screen business revolving around some concrete article.

All too often the scenario writer leans heavily upon the subtitle as a means of conveying some complicated thought to the audience. Of course, there are instances where no other means will achieve the end. But those instances are rare. In the majority of cases, that same idea or emotion may be transferred to the spectator through the agency of a prop.

All this is of primary importance to the continuity writer. But it applies just the same to the writer of original screen stories. One of the major faults of the amateur screen writer is his reliance on clever (?) subtitles.

If that same writer continually visualized his or her story as it is written; if the author succeeded in assuming the role of continuity writer without actually writing the continuity, the story would improve accordingly.

If, every time you have some bit of business, some thought or some emotion in mind in writing your story, you keep in mind Cecil B. De Mille's motto of "Say it with props," your story is certain to profit by it.

Although subtitles are an essential part of the photoplay, they nevertheless impede the smooth flow of the story. The fewer subtitles required, the nearer the approach to photoplay perfection.

Subtitles can be avoided by only one means that I know of--screen "business." In other words, the thought may be conveyed by having the character do something or refer to something that makes the situation clear to the spectator.

Almost all dramatic "business" requires the assistance of a prop or two. Hence, if the writer continually keeps in mind the slogan of "Say it with props," the need for subtitles is continually diminished.

Almost anything may be a prop. I have written scenes wherein a girl watching a fly climb a wall conveyed more to the audience than several hundred words of subtitle might have done. There the fly became a prop.

Again, a prop may be a limousine or a prayerbook; a wine bottle or a baby's rattle. It is the writer's task to single out the particular article that, in the hands of the player or within the vision of the actor, may best serve to convey the particular thought.

There are no rules whereby the amateur writer may be instructed in the use of props in developing a story. The best advice on this score is the same advice that goes for all phases of scenario writing: Study motion pictures. See for yourself what the professional, experienced scenario writers are doing along the line.

It will be found, I think, that the majority of successful photoplays show the maximum use of props. The trained writer automatically casts about for a means of this kind to put over the particular idea of the moment.

That tendency is the result of training. The beginner requires the aid of just such reminders as the cards that Cecil B. De Mille caused to be printed and distributed to the new writers who are studying under his supervision at the Lasky Studio.

"Say it with props" if you would write screen stories that will meet the approval of the producers...

I have gone to great extremes in order to learn how people actually act under certain conditions, so that I might use my experiences in my scenario work.

Once I operated an airplane for the late Lieutenant Locklear in one of his screen thrillers.

And I shall never forget the famous fight with Geraldine Farrar in "Carmen," when I nearly had my hair torn out by the roots.

When I offered to fight Miss Farrar "for the experience," they laughed at me. "Why, Jeanie, you're not an actress any more," they told me. "Why risk getting yourself all scarred and battered?"

But a writer has to have something authentic to write about. I wanted to know how a woman felt under such great stress; I might want to describe her psychology in a scenario. I felt that a woman under the emotional strain of a fist fight was something I knew nothing about and would be wise to learn.

Mr. De Mille finally allowed me in the fight. We certainly fought. We pulled hair and clothes, and in the heat of the combat we forgot director, camera, and studio. We were two primitive beings in the grip of a tremendous anger. I learned just how the mind functions under such a condition, and I have used my knowledge many times since.

Yes, first hand information is valuable in writing photoplays. Too many beginners get their data out of the encyclopedia. And so very many write of people and lands they know nothing about. We get stories of India by people who have never been east of Pittsburgh, and we get thrilling "westerns" from confirmed inhabitants of New York City.

Look around you. Perhaps there is a thrilling motion picture story in the family next door. Certainly within a block of you there is a plot for a picture that some body will buy.

The best background for a scenario writer is, of course, to have a wide general knowledge of life rather than a specialized knowledge of any of any

particular phase or locality.

* * * * *

November 12, 1921

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

This week I shall talk not so much to the amateur scenario writer who is content merely to turn out a story for the screen once in a while and regards his film writing as pastime, but to the writer who would like to take up motion picture editorial work as a regular career and whose ambition is to join the scenario staff of some film company.

What would such a career be like?

Perhaps if I described a typical day in the life of a scenario writer, drawing from my own experience, you could answer that question.

In one sense, a scenario writer never has "a typical day." Every day is different. Every day brings a new set of problems. Some may be solved in five minutes; others require five hours or five days.

Because of the unusual demands of the work "office hours" in the usual sense of the words are an unknown quantity. My day's work may start when I arise in the morning and end when I fall asleep at night. That doesn't necessarily mean that I am writing continuously from dawn to dark. But it does mean that I am studying and thinking over situations; that I am planning the action of a story or threshing out in my own mind some knotty problem of scenario construction.

My hours at the Lasky Studio are regular only in the sense that I try to arrive there between nine and ten o'clock in the morning. Whenever possible, I devote my first hour there to necessary business appointments and routine details which must be attended to daily. There are letters to write and semi-business and personal matters pertaining to the work which must not be

allowed to accumulate from day to day.

My office is really not an office at all. Rather is it a work shop, a den and a library rolled into one. And of these the term work shop is the most truly descriptive, for after that first hour it becomes the scene of a full day's work.

While a scenario is in the process of construction there are numberless consultations with Mr. De Mille. First comes the idea--and a thorough discussion of it with Mr. De Mille. Scenarios are not things of the minute. Often the idea which serves us as the motive has lain in the back of one's head for months or years.

If Mr. De Mille is interested--if he considers the idea practical--I proceed to rough out the story. I wish to "put over" such-and-such a theme. What kind of action will best accomplish this end? Lengthy thought, occasional reference to past experience and thorough discussion of the subject with Mr. De Mille are the means which I use to come to a solution of this first problem.

In almost every story there are purely technical angles which must be carefully studied if the story is to ring true. How did people conduct themselves in such-and-such a period? How did they regard certain matters? And so through dozens of similar questions which must be answered before the story can be put on paper.

Having secured the necessary information and having the general outline of the story well in mind, I proceed to write it, scene by scene. I do all of my writing in longhand and turn over my manuscript to my stenographer for copying. Many scenario writers, I believe, either use a typewriter themselves or dictate their continuity--the scene-by-scene working plot of the story--to a stenographer. I prefer to write mine with pencil and paper, although it is undoubtedly slower and more tiring.

And so through the day I labor at my scenario. Often the evenings will be devoted to consultations with Mr. De Mille or some other interested person. Sometimes the story becomes so absorbingly interesting that I work on into the night without thought of time.

Not infrequently the work of filming the story gets under way before the final scenes are written. This means that I must keep well in advance of the production work with my writing if I am to avoid halting this highly expensive process.

But through all of this there is no such thing as "an average day's work." Every day is a day unto itself. It may start at noon and end at three in the morning of the following day, or it may start at nine and end when the work is finished.

Sometimes I think that the grind of it will prove too much for me. But it never does. The work, for all of its disadvantages, possesses an appeal which I can never refuse. It is often hard, generally irregular as to hours and frequently trying to the patience. But it still continues to claim my time and my best efforts and so I suppose it will continue to do so.

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December 3, 1921
Jeanie Macpherson
MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

"How can I learn to write scenarios?"

That question, variously worded, is the burden of scores of letters that reach my desk. Attempting to answer it is much like telling an ambitious music-lover how to play the violin.

Fortunately for the ambitious musician there are many capable teachers but unfortunately for the would-be screen writer there is a woeful lack of competent instruction on the subject of scenario writing. The whole art of the photodrama is still too new, too young to have developed this important but secondary department. Those who know how are too busy to tell others.

The answer I make to this question is invariably the same: Study pictures!

In lieu of actual personal instruction from a master of screen writing technique, there is no better method of learning both the form and general content of scenario writing. Go to see pictures and more pictures and still more pictures! See for yourself how dramatic situations are constructed; how dramatic suspense is created; how thought is photographed.

Merely sitting through a picture or two will not accomplish the desired results, just as two or three casually taken violin lessons will not teach you how to play the violin. It takes years to master this instrument--years of hard work and patient study. Scenario writing, despite popular opinion, is vastly harder than playing the violin and it cannot be learned in a week or even a month.

If you are seriously attempting to learn the technique of screen writing try this experiment: Go to see three or more of the best pictures every week for a period of six months. Do not attempt to write a finished manuscript in that period. Devote it entirely to study and, if you like, practice writing.

In studying the pictures that you see, strive to analyze and segregate the elements that all pictures have in common: Their dramatic form and structure; their emotional or psychological appeal.

Make a list of the subject matter--the themes--of all of these pictures. It will teach you what type of story is in demand by the American public which in turn controls the producer who is your potential employer.

Watch and listen to the people around you in the theatre. See how they react to the story as it unrolls on the screen. Their comments will often be valuable guide posts in your subsequent work.

If, at the end of your six months probation and study period, you still feel that you are capable of writing for the screen, select your idea and develop it on the composite model that you should have in mind by this time.

If your story depends upon plot primarily, the chances are that you are wasting your time. The day of the purely action picture has gone; the picture of today and tomorrow must have a theme--a vital, real idea. It must depend upon thought rather than action; psychology rather than plot.

Many of the inquiries that reach my desk seek information on the best

form in which to submit a scenario idea to the producer. Although there is no rule in this matter, most scenario editors prefer the story in synopsis form. This does not mean that a short story style need be developed. All that is necessary is a clear outline of the story told as briefly as possible without the omission of any of the detail that may aid in conveying the idea to both the editor and the public.

Insofar as I know, no producer today requires that a submitted story shall be developed into a continuity to be salable. Continuity writing is a distinct and highly specialized branch of screen writing and producers prefer to leave this work to the specialists. No amateur writer can hope to produce a continuity that will meet the requirements of the producer. Even if the continuity were dramatically passable--which it is not likely to be--it would be almost certain to require complete re-writing to fit the individual producer and star...

Scenario writing cannot be mastered overnight nor can the ambitious writer expect to set the world afire with his or her first venture in a new field. Success is never won without a fight. If your story is rejected you may be sure that the fault is yours and not the studio reader's. It is your task to locate that fault and correct it and by your ability to do this will be reckoned your success or failure.

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December 24, 1921

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

Don't write screen stories that require explanatory subtitles in profusion!

Although it is doubtful if the American photoplay ever succeeds in eliminating the subtitle altogether--and it is an open question whether such

elimination is to be desired--it is nevertheless true that the ideal photoplay is the photoplay with the minimum number of subtitles.

The purpose of the subtitle is to explain or emphasize a point. Used sparingly for these purposes it has a definite place in the scenario of today. The American public is not yet ready--and perhaps never will be ready--to accept Continental pantomime with its complete absence of the spoken or written word.

So-called "spoken titles" and the use of dialogue are not infrequently of tremendous value in the construction of the scenario and the finished photoplay. But all of these must be used very, very sparingly.

A properly constructed photoplay should capture the spectators' attention and the outset and hold it without interruption to the finish. There should be no let-down--no waning of interest at any point. The audience should be able to lose itself completely in this story.

To achieve this result two things are necessary: Dramatic suspense and smooth continuity. It is with the latter quality that the subtitle has to do.

Every time the action of a story is halted for printed words to be thrown on the screen there is a tiny break in the interest of the spectator. This is inevitable. But in many instances the results justify the means. Sometimes a subtitle will serve to whip the spectator's interest to an even higher pitch.

One of the commonest faults of the amateur writer when faced with a knotty situation in his or her story is to inject a subtitle to clarify the atmosphere. To the amateur almost every problem is a knotty one with the result that the story is one long succession of potential subtitles.

In a previous article I emphasized the importance of re-writing every story several times. This is of value in a multitude of ways and it is exceedingly useful in eliminating opportunities for subtitles. Frequently I have found that subtitles that seemed absolutely essential in the first rough draft of the story became superfluous as the story is worked over and over again. With each re-writing I succeeded in weeding out many such potential

subtitles.

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December 31, 1921

Jeanie Macpherson

MOVIE WEEKLY

Hints to Scenario Writers

...I have never written a screen story that has not required more time for the acquisition of data than it did to write. In some instances twice or three times as much time was devoted to mastering the facts before I set pen to paper.

An instance of this is to be found in "Joan the Woman." We-- Mr. De Mille and I--have been criticized many times for the alleged liberty with fact which we are supposed to have taken. These charges are untrue. There is not a single incident in the story of "Joan the Woman" that isn't backed up by historical fact. I know because I spent months reading every line that has been printed regarding the famous Maid of Orleans.

Critics pointed out that Joan never had a love affair; that no man ever loved her. If these same critics had taken the same trouble to learn the facts they would not have made that criticism. As a matter of fact, Joan had a boyhood lover whom she considered marrying before she was called to her greater mission.

Nor is the necessity for a complete knowledge of the facts restricted to the historical drama. The need is just as great or greater in dealing with matters of everyday occurrence. Nine out of ten people may not be in a position to question the facts regarding the life of Joan d'Arc, but a full ten out of every ten people will be able to criticize modern problems and facts because all the world is familiar with these facts.

Therefore, it behooves the writer to have these facts correct and beyond criticism. To be a really successful scenario writer it is almost necessary

to be a jack of all trades and a walking encyclopedia of information. But it will suffice if the writer makes it his or her business to really know what is being written at that particular moment.

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August 19, 1922
Jeanie Macpherson
MOVIE WEEKLY

"I Have Been In Hell"-- or In Search of Prison Knowledge

I have been in hell!

I have plumbed the utmost depths of human degradation.

I have seen women's souls stripped stark naked.

I have been face to face with humanity at its worst.

And I have met the most perfect kindness and sympathy it has ever been my lot to experience.

I have been in jail.

I did not visit the jail as a privileged guest. I went as a criminal, serving a sentence. I was arrested, charged with simple larceny, tried, convicted and sentenced to ten days in prison. I served three days and three nights of that sentence--three depressing days and three horrible nights. I wore the prison garb and ate--or tried to eat--the prison fare. And I know, from personal experience, just what "prison hysteria" is.

I am a scenario writer. Complete knowledge of my subject is a requisite of my work. It was in search of this knowledge that I went to prison. I found it.

In the photoplay that I am writing for Cecil B. De Mille's production, in the near future, the chief feminine character is sentenced to prison for manslaughter. "Manslaughter" is the title of the story. The girl goes to prison a selfish egotist. She emerges completely changed. In order that I

might understand the influences at work on this character during her prison stay, I, too, went to jail.

When I decided to make this experiment, I selected the Detroit House of Correction as the institution that would best serve my purpose. The name is a misnomer. It is not a reform school. Instead, it is a penitentiary-- a penitentiary that has the unique distinction of housing Michigan's Federal feminine offenders of every type of crime--State prisoners, County prisoners and the City of Detroit's municipal prisoners and doing all this in a fashion that compares favorably with the Middle Ages.

There were several reasons for this choice. One was the sinister reputation of the institution. The second was that this is the only jail in the country where petty criminals are confined with those serving sentence for manslaughter. Another was that my family numbers among its friends-- a man formerly prominent in the administration of the Detroit prison. This individual was the only person whom I took into my confidence. I wished to have his aid in securing my release, should the experience become unbearable.

With the exception of this man, no one connected with the experiment knew that I was not in fact "Angel Brown." It was under this name that I "operated" when I stole a fur neck piece of nominal value from a woman of my family's acquaintance who was living at the Hotel Statler. She reported her loss to the house detective and I was arrested before I had left the building.

Hailed into court, I gave my name as "Angel Brown" from San Francisco, and was charged with simple larceny. I pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to a fine of ten dollars or the alternative of ten days in the Detroit House of Correction. On my statement that I did not have the money to pay the fine, I was turned over to a police officer with instructions to commit me to jail.

Just at this point, all my plans were threatened by a big fatherly Irish policeman who was detailed to conduct me to the prison. On our way down to the alley where the patrolwagon was to meet us, he said:

"This is your first time up, isn't it, little girl?"

I assured him that it was.

"Isn't there anyone you know who will put up the money and keep you out of jail?"

There was no one, I declared.

"I hate to see you go to that place. You wait right here"--and he pushed me through a door into a bare waiting room on the level with the jail alley--"I think I know a man who will lend us the money."

My heart sank. After all my trouble to get into jail, my plans were about to be frustrated by the kind heart of a well-meaning policeman!

My good-natured policeman soon returned with failure written all over his kindly features. His friend was unable to help. There was nothing else to do but load me into the "Black Maria" and send me on my way. He had no suspicion that I was thanking Providence for his failure.

I arrived at the jail late in the afternoon. My guardian turned me over to the chief matron, who knew me only as a thief, and the iron bars figuratively and literally closed behind me.

There followed the formality of booking me. My name and sentence were the outstanding facts noted by the matron's secretary, a trusty serving a long term. After this I was stripped to the skin and searched for narcotics. They even took down my hair and made a painstaking examination of it.

When it came to selecting my prison garb, I was allowed to choose between long and short-sleeved underwear. I chose the long, for it was December and cold. With it went the faded gingham coverall, prison-made and drab. Despite the coldness of the weather, this garment had short sleeves. I selected my footwear from a great pile of shoes that occupied one corner of the matron's office. My choice fell upon a pair of dirty misshapen things that fitted approximately and had been splashed with paint and whitewash at one time in the recent past.

From the office, I was conducted by the trusty to the cell assigned to me. It was on the second tier of the cell-block which consisted of four tiers of twenty cells each--accommodations for eighty prisoners. And at the time of my incarceration, the jail contained one hundred and forty women

prisoners. Beds in the corridors supplied sleeping accommodations for those not assigned to cells. White and black, petty criminals and murderesses sleep, eat and work, side by side.

The cell into which I was ushered was without a window and measured approximately six feet in length, six feet in height, and not over five feet in width. Most of this room was occupied by my bunk bearing a straw mattress, blankets and prison-made linen, but no pillow. This and a broken-down chair, tin wash basin and pitcher and pail were the sole furnishings.

I made my prison debut in the midst of the so-called recreation hour. This is the period in late afternoon when the girls, having finished a day's work in the shops, are permitted to wander about the corridor-like space that surrounds the cell-block itself. This space is called the recreation room, although there is no semblance of recreation facilities, and was very cold. Two hard benches and a few straight kitchen chairs and one small table constituted the furnishings, and I saw no evidence of any books or literature.

On the particular day that I arrived, the girls were in the chapel of prison viewing a motion picture. The picture was a cheap industrial film, showing the making of a newspaper and Panama Canal, badly made and badly photographed. I think a strapping negro girl voiced the opinion of the majority when at the conclusion of the picture, she said: "My Gawd, why don't they give us a love story once-in-a-while!"

I had heard that clever crooks never talked or made intimates and that the common criminals respected the mental superiority of those who could resist the temptation to gossip about anything and everything. I was relying on this fact to carry me safely through the shoals of cross-examination on the part of my cell mates.

It was fortunate that I adopted this attitude. I had hardly returned to my cell before a delegation of curious visitors dropped in to find out all about me and to get the latest news from the outside. Everyone wanted to know, first of all, where I came from. Every single one of them tremendously anxious to hear the news from their own home town. Since I claimed San

Francisco as my home, I disappointed them all. And it did disappoint them. One girl, speaking for herself spoke for them all when she demanded: "Hell, I thought you was from Flint."

My refusal to talk won me immediate respect. And when it was nosed around that I had been caught "working" the Hotel Statler, single-handed, I became a near-heroine. The Statler detective system is known and feared by all criminals, I learned. My supposed consummate nerve won their respect.

But if I kept silent, no one else did. Apparently everybody talked all the time, calling loudly back and forth from cell to cell. It is part of the hysteria of the place. Speech relieves the tension that they are all under, consciously or unconsciously.

Supper interrupted the cross-examination. We filed into the long dining room and I faced my first prison meal.

Long wooden tables and benches were the chief articles of furniture in this room. Some one with a sense of humor had posted a large sign at one end of the room commanding silence, but the babble of voices and the clatter of granite-ware dishes continued at fever heat throughout every meal.

Supper consisted of a greasy soup that had soured; two pieces of white bread without butter; a mug of some mysterious black liquid erroneously named coffee.

I believe that I can eat any kind of food that is fit for human consumption, but there are limits; and this meal and its successors went beyond that limit.

Supper over, we arose on signal from the presiding matron and filed back to our cells. As I entered mine, the door banged shut behind me and locked. Then I began my first night in jail.

For a time the hysterical racket that had gone on steadily since my advent continued. When it subsided a little I threw myself on the bunk and amused myself by analyzing my emotions of the day. Eventually I dropped into a fitful sleep.

How long I slept I have no means of knowing, but it could not have been more than a few hours. I was awakened by a peculiar crawling sensation that

meant but one thing--vermin!

There was no more sleep for me that night. Wide-eyed, I sat on the edge of my bunk and prayed for daylight.

I have heard and read much of the terrible feeling of being shut in, buried alive and suffocated that prisoners undergo during their first night in prison, but until the time of my own experience, I believe it to be largely imaginative. It is not. It is the most real thing in the world. I felt that the walls of my tiny, windowless cell were slowly closing in on me--I could not breathe. The close cell, cleaned with a sickening disinfectant seemed, to strangle me. There are no words to picture the suffocating horror that envelops one at this time. Hysteria succeeds reason--I wanted to scream and beat my head against the stone walls of the cell--anything to push them away. Only one tiny portion of my brain remained rational. It was this tiny control center that kept me from going stark, staring mad for the time, at least.

In spite of this semi-control, by four o'clock in the morning I was on the verge of panic. Partly in an effort to relieve the tension and partly in search of information regarding prison routine, I feigned sickness and shouted for assistance.

I succeeded in attracting the attention of a trusty who was detailed to nurse service. She made a sympathetic effort to diagnose my trouble, but she was unable to render any real assistance. At my insistence, she summoned the night matron and I told my troubles to her. She explained that the jail hospital was closed for the night; that the chief matron was the only one who could open my cell door, even for sickness; and that this lady could never be disturbed until she reached her office at nine o'clock in the morning. That meant that if I was in danger of death I could go ahead and die without medical aid before nine A. M.! The night matron even refused me a piece of paper to fan myself with.

Throughout my feigned illness, the neighboring prisoners kept up a perfect bombardment of encouragement and sympathy. The nurse-trusty was infinitely sympathetic, but she was powerless to aid.

This excitement served to combat the evil atmosphere of the night, but daylight seemed to be ages away. And it was not until we were released about eight for breakfast that I succeeded in ridding myself of the hysterical feeling.

Some time between eight and eight-thirty--at the discretion of the matron--we were freed from our cells. En route to breakfast we made our toilettes--such as they were. Inasmuch as toothbrushes, toothpaste, combs and soap were absolutely forbidden, this was an exceedingly sketchy affair. There were woman in that prison who had not had a comb in their hair for months. They kept it in place with string, bits of hairpin, or anything else that could be adopted to the purpose. A trough into which all the prison filth is emptied by the prisoners--also en route to breakfast--does not add to one's grooming.

From this service, we marched to the meal itself. Like its predecessor, it was inedible as far as I was concerned, at least. The same two pieces of bread, the same nameless black liquid, or the alternative of bluish white milk, and a watery fluid in which a few grains of some cereal were floating made up the menu. I counted the cereal grains--I think they were rice--and found six in my dish.

Breakfast over, we marched to the shops. We were set to work making cane and reed chair seats. In other departments of this same shop, brushes are made and the prison tailoring shop turns out the prison clothes and linen. This work is done by the long-termers during work hours, although most of them eat and live together with the short-termers.

At noon we were marched back across the courtyard between the prison proper and the shop building for luncheon. White bread to the number of two slices, two slim "wenies," sloppy cabbage and the unbelievably bad coffee made up this repast. The "wenies" were a luxury. Usually mealy looking baked beans formed the main course of lunch. Meat was allowed once about every two days, I learned.

The shops claimed our attention throughout the afternoon, although the total amount of work done was negligible. Any petty criminal who works

earnestly in the shop is promptly reprimanded by her sisters. It sets a bad example and makes the prison authorities expect more of the other prisoners.

Late in the afternoon we were herded from the shop back to the cell block and the so-called recreation hour. And once again I was subjected to a severe grilling by my cell mates.

Except that it had lost some of its terror, the second night was a repetition of the first. Sleep was impossible. Through the night I heard the multitudinous sounds of many women confined in a tiny space, quarreling back and forth or forming discordant screening quarters in an effort to ward off as long as possible the spectre of the long dreary night. I was told on good authority that the old-timers long ago had learned to pick the locks of their individual cells and many of them surreptitiously visited friends in other cells for purposes better guessed at than said.

Two tiny windows on the wall opposite the cell-block furnished the ventilation for this entire structure. Imagine one hundred and forty women living in a space ventilated by these two windows and overheated by badly placed steam pipes and you will be able to conjure up a picture that resembles the steam room of a Turkish bath, peopled with all the stenches of human existence made nauseating by the persistent odor of disinfectant.

During a lull in the noises, I heard one woman, a cell or two away, instructing a neighbor in the art of crocheting. They could not see each other, but one had evidently secured crochet needles and material, and the other was explaining how many stitches it would take her per day to finish the collar for her baby back home, by Christmas!

By dawn I was more than satiated with my jail experience. It seemed to me that another twenty-four hours of this would be impossible. Confident of my ability to reach my friend, the prison official, I survived the night. After breakfast I sought a means of reaching this influential gentleman. I learned that he had quarreled with his superiors the previous day, and forgetting about me, resigned! Furthermore, I would have been unable to reach him even if he had remained in his position!

To serve the full ten days without sleep or food was beyond my powers of

endurance. I began to plan frantically to achieve my release. I bethought myself of my mother, Mrs. O'Neill, who was living with my uncle. I took council with the nurse who had been so sympathetic during my supposed illness without, however, telling her that my crime had been faked. She advised me to go to the matron and explain that I knew of a woman who might pay my fine. Perhaps the matron would notify her.

I took an additional twenty-four hours to bring this about. The matron was skeptical, but I insisted that this "kind lady" had frequently befriended me in the past and might be prevailed upon to do so again! Needless to say, my mother had been disturbed by my continued absence. She knew that I was in jail, but she had expected me to return at the end of the first day. By the third day she was nearly frantic. When the matron phoned to say that there was a girl in the House of Correction who said she knew Mrs. O'Neill and wanted her to pay the fine, my mother never even waited to find out the name of the criminal. She assured the matron that she would take care of the matter and hastened to the judge. We have often wondered what the matron thought of the pair of us.

My release came at the close of the third day--almost seventy-two hours after my entrance. In that time I lost twelve pounds and I was sick with hunger and loss of sleep. As I left, a group of fellow prisoners gathered at the door to wish me good luck. I shall never forget the picture they made. I call them my "gray ghosts." Unkempt and drab, they waved me good-bye with a sincere wish that I might "stay out" and prosper.

No one who has not had a similar experience can appreciate the outlook of the criminal serving sentence. To them the world is reversed. Out of prison we eulogize people in direct ratio to their lack of criminal ability; the criminal idealizes the master crook. The bigger the crime, the higher the social position of the criminal! That is the code of the underworld and nowhere is the effect of this code more strikingly emphasized than in prison. One loses his perspective on crime. Even with my slender experience, I found myself adopting their viewpoint. If the atmosphere can do that to me in three days, think what it can do in months or years to the confirmed

criminal.

Of one thing I am convinced: Most of the women serving in the Detroit House of Correction were cases of psychopathic care or, at least, expert medical attention. Many of them, I am convinced, could be returned to normal life by proper care and psychological treatment--not physical punishment. But they can never return under the existing conditions.

The effect of such an experience on a woman, born and bred to a very different place in life, is certain to be revolutionary. The girl in "Manslaughter" leads a life of ease and self-gratification up to the time that she goes to prison. Most of the penitentiaries, and especially the women's prisons in New York State, are vastly better than the jail in which I suffered. But this girl must go through that horrible first night in some intermediate City or County Jail. That is one moment that is certain to exert a powerful influence upon her. And by comparison with this experience, the actual penitentiary will seem a paradise.

I went in search of an experience and I found it. I wouldn't go through the same experience again for any amount of money. But I wouldn't sell it for an even greater sum.

* * * * *

January 21, 1923

Dorothy Day

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Jeanie Macpherson Rests Amid Roars of Broadway

Jeanie Macpherson is in New York resting. Unlike most writers, she does not resort to the farm for relaxation, but takes a suite in a hotel in the very busiest part of Broadway, where the glare of the electric light signs flicker in through the windows and the roar of the many street noises hurl up their ceaseless symphony.

"Adam's Rib," which Cecil B. De Mille finished screening a short time ago, is the latest picture story from the pen of this charming young writer. Her next effort is to be called "The Ten Commandments." This title was selected from thousands which were received in response to a prize offer of \$1,000 in a contest for the best picture title. Letters with suggestions poured into the Lasky office from China, Japan, Germany, France, Africa and America. Three translators were kept hard at work. During the first week of the contest a letter came containing the suggestion "The Ten Commandments" and before the thirty days of the contest were over seven more with the same idea were received, and so when it was finally decided that the title was to win the prize, \$5,000, instead of \$1,000, had to be distributed.

It is interesting to note from what varied sources the same suggestion sprung. One was from a poor widow who was struggling to pay for a small house in which she and her four children live. The money came as manna from heaven to her.

Another one of the winners was a major, who, when he sent in his suggestion, stated that if by any chance it should be accepted, he desired the money to go to the crippled children's hospital.

A boy working his way through college was awarded one of the \$1,000 prizes, which, of course, meant a great deal to him.

A society woman donated her winnings to a charitable organization.

Many people whose suggestions were rejected wrote in that they were glad of it, because they realized that "The Ten Commandments" affords far greater possibilities than their own idea of a title.

Miss Macpherson does not even let herself think about the method she will use in developing the story for the picture. She is letting her mind have a complete rest, so that when she returns to Hollywood the first part of February, she will be refreshed and ready to start work on it in real earnest. The story will not be a Biblical one, but will be modern in design, with the commandments applied to everyday life. Miss Macpherson says that there is nothing antique about the commandments--that they are practically embodied in our present laws--also that the subject will have to be handled

in a delicate manner so as not to offend any religion. One of her friends asked her how she would develop the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," without treading on an army of toes, to which she very resourcefully replied that in the original Hebraic form the words were simply "Thou shalt not covet."

It seems that since their origin some one has been at work amending the commandments.

Miss Macpherson grew indignant when the subject of the vices of Hollywood were approached. "It is a deplorable truth," she said, "that human nature is so constituted that tales of virtue are never as interesting as stories of vice"--and so all we hear in the East about wicked Hollywood, which might readily lead us to believe that dope parties take place right in the middle of the main street, are only one side of the story, and that a negative side. "There are 30,000 men and women out in Hollywood," continued Miss Macpherson, "who are working seriously for the pictures, and there are any number of happy families who live sane, decent lives." If Miss Macpherson's serious little face is an echo of the true spirit of Hollywood, then we'll say it must be a pretty fine place.

Aeroplaning is one of Miss Macpherson's chief delights. She pilots the machine herself and guarantees that a trip in the air will cure any woman of such petty fears as mice and spiders.

Mr. De Mille, who will direct "The Ten Commandments," is off cruising on his yacht somewhere in the Pacific. He plans to go to the Tiberan Islands, off the south coast of California, which is said to be inhabited by a savage tribe of Indians. He is interested to see these people, who are alleged to be very primitive, and who rarely encourage visitors to their shores. He is also going to catch some ray fish. These, Miss Macpherson said, are thirty feet broad, and are caught by means of a harpoon. And thus do our great minds of the pictures seek rest and relaxation.

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Building the Dramatic Scenario

The trouble with ninety-nine out of one hundred stories is that they lack the cement of perspective.

A group of very pretty, well-made bricks of situation and character portrayal are made and are set on top of each other. But they tumble in a heap when pushed with the prod of dramatic analysis because there is nothing to hold them together. And even if there is a slight joining medium running through the story structure, oft times the brick of particular characters is so much larger or smaller than the situations to which it is attached as to create an equally dangerous weakness.

I would be carried away with the particular series of sermons I was writing. I would build them and build them and build them. And then at the end I would find them utterly out of proportion to other elements, equally important dramatically but not nearly as interesting to develop.

And I would find that a small minor character would so intrigue me that I would load upon the lady or gentleman a great deal of very important business which would give them a flash in the limelight for a few scenes and then die out, without having advanced the story in any way.

A story is a unit and not a conglomeration, but this is a fact that few who desire to write ever learn.

Amateur writers too often get panic-stricken when minor characters get out of hand. The tendency then is to throw too much of the plot to them and, as a result, the story develops a jarring flat wheel.

When a minor character seems to be gobbling too much, I transfer its business to a major character and thus move toward a smooth, direct plot.

But sometimes this action is real torture. In "Don't Change Your Husband," I had a wife's friend who was simply lovely. She was a piquant,

delightful little piece. I had all sorts of fun playing with her. But one day I woke up and found she was nothing but a nice, big log right square in the path of my leading lady. I wept about twenty-four hours, and then carefully amputated my pet, transferring all of her important action to the feminine principal.

I would say, "Keep your minor characters down to the limit." But you must have some. Those that pass the acid test are very vital to your story in their capacity as scavengers, removers of waste material in the way of the plot's progress.

Take Lois Wilson's baby boy and her mother in "Manslaughter," You see the boy but twice or three times--and yet he provides the motivation for all of the tense drama which surrounds the mother part and he does it with very little waste of "footage."

The boy's grandmother you see but once, but that one time saves us half a dozen titles and keeps the audience from worrying about the child for three reels, by showing us that the boy is being kept well and happy while his mother is in prison. The grandmother is an excellent example of the manner in which a minor character may keep debris from cluttering a plot.

Cecil B. De Mille has me read this first synopsis to him. But he does not allow me to relate the story as I have written it. He forces me to condense the flower of my imaginative writing into plain, unadorned description of the dramatic action. His reason for this is that he does not wish to have his dramatic sense clouded by the imaginative fervor of my first rush into the story.

Then comes the "one-line continuity." Each scene is written in one or two lines. It is the "clearing house" of the story, for here we are concerned with straightening out the structure and the motivation. Everything is eliminated that is not essential to the building of these fundamentals.

Then I start my second continuity. In this continuity I am through with the problems of building structure and drama. My sole concern is with the precision and accuracy with which my characters move, the determining of

whether it would be better for a certain player to die in the sitting room or the bedroom, etc.

But a scene that sounds great on paper may fail to hit when the camera cranks upon it. And back it comes for revision, and it is changed until the minutest detail holds water.

Finally the picture is finished.

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WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)
